

THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MARITIME HISTORY



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The Steamer Vesta: Neglected Partner in a Fatal Collision

BY ALEXANDER CROSBY BROWN

IT is perhaps surprising that the ship which first so graphically demonstrated the superiority of an iron hull over a wooden one in the event of collision at sea should have faded into oblivion so quickly. Deserving of a better fate was the little French iron screw steamer *Vesta*, survivor of her terrible encounter with the many-times larger, wooden side-wheeler *Arctic* of the Collins Line on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland on the foggy high noon of 27 September 1854.

Naturally the attention of the world was more directed to the heart-rending loss of life when the 'staunch' and magnificent *Arctic* sank. It was she who was considered the crack transatlantic liner of her day, a 'blue riband' winner, and the despicable conduct of stampeding firemen and crew who made off with the insufficient lifeboats, leaving women and children to perish, eclipsed all other news. Briefly, the contemporary journals bestowed laurels on thirty-year-old Captain Alphonse Duchesne for the superior seamanly skill he displayed. He saved his crippled little *Vesta* and brought her safely into port at St. John's, Newfoundland, just before a storm broke which would certainly have finished her off.¹ But, understandably, *Arctic* held the spotlight and *Vesta* was soon forgotten.

The following article will attempt to give all that is presently known about *Vesta* and to describe the fatal collision from her point of view and then to trace the few known facts about her subsequent career. Such, for example, was her near-foundering a second time on her return trip to France.

The steamer *Vesta* was a typical 'propeller' of her day. Built in 1853 at Nantes, France, she measured about 250 gross and 168 net tons.² She was rigged as a three-masted bark with hull painted black and salmon-colored bottom, lead-colored poop and boats, and a slightly raked black smoke-

¹ *The Public Ledger*, St. John's, Newfoundland, 3 October 1854.

² *The Herald*, New York, 15 October 1854.

stack located between main and mizzenmasts.³ Length, breadth and depth were recorded respectively as 152 feet by 20.3 feet by 10.4 feet. *Vesta's* steam engine, in this case little more than an auxiliary, was rated at 60 horsepower. Her hull, of iron plate, was compartmented by three transverse watertight iron bulkheads.

Vesta was owned by Hernoux & Cie., one of the wealthiest houses of Dieppe which made a practice of equipping vessels for the Grand Banks fisheries. It was customary for them to send out a steamer in the fall to carry provisions to those fishing vessels which had elected to remain in the Western Hemisphere during the winter season, bringing back to France the fishermen who would not be needed there along with a cargo of cod-fish.⁴ Serving as this type of tender, earlier in the autumn of 1854 *Vesta* had been dispatched to St. Pierre with a load of salt. At the time of the collision she was returning from the little French island with her crew of fifty and a comparatively large number of passengers consisting of 147 fishermen and salters homeward bound before winter set in.

The story of the disaster has often been told.⁵ The weather on the Banks in the neighborhood of Virgin Rocks on Wednesday, 27 September, was characterized by periods of good visibility punctuated by patches of thick fog. The splendid *Arctic*, nicknamed 'Clipper of the Seas,' had three days to go before arriving at her home port of New York. With a full passenger list, she had had a routine west-bound crossing from Liverpool and was skipping along the oily swells steaming at twelve knots.

Vesta, bound in the opposite direction and making eight to ten knots with all sail set before a fair wind, was one day out of St. Pierre. Captain James C. Luce of *Arctic* had finished taking his noon sights and had retired to the chart room to work them out. *Arctic* had just ducked into another patch of fog when the lookout's alarmed cry gave warning of imminent disaster. Evidently both ships sighted each other at the same moment. It was reported that the watch officer on *Vesta* screamed 'Luff, luff, there is a ship bearing down upon us!'⁶

But the warning was too late. In another second the ships came to-

³ As observed by George Burns, passenger on *Arctic*, whose statement appeared in *The Weekly Herald*, New York, 14 October 1854, and other papers.

⁴ *The Herald*, New York, 15 October 1854.

⁵ As for example, A. C. Brown, 'Women and Children Lost: The Tragic Loss of the Steamship *Arctic*,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, XIV, No. 4 (October, 1954), 237-261. See also 'A Footnote to the Loss of *Arctic*,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, XIX, No. 2 (April, 1959), 128-133. Virtually every work on the transatlantic steam navigation contains at least a section devoted to the loss of *Arctic*. One of the better is W. Mack Angas, *Rivalry on the Atlantic, 1839-1939* (New York, 1939), Chapt. IV, 'The end of the *Arctic*.'

⁶ Testimony of a fisherman survivor of *Vesta*, Jassonet François, quoted in *The Herald*, New York, 22 October 1854.

gether. It was a glancing blow, but *Vesta's* iron stem and one of her anchor stocks raked *Arctic* before wrenching off and imbedding themselves in her starboard bow planking just below the waterline. Captain Luce was certain that the vessel *Arctic* had hit was doomed, for as she bumped along *Arctic's* guards and then sheared away astern, he could see that ten feet of her bows were cut off or crushed with the foremast down and dangling helplessly in the water.

Since little more than a slight jar had been felt on *Arctic*, Captain Luce assumed she could not have been too badly injured and his first instinct was to give aid to the obviously stricken vessel he had run into. Accordingly, he immediately dispatched his first mate and boat's crew to render assistance. But hardly had the lifeboat rowed away before it became apparent that *Arctic's* wounds were by no means superficial.⁷

Meanwhile, bedlam had broken loose on *Vesta*. Most of her passengers were on deck at the time of the collision and terror seized them in the face of what seemed certain doom. Two lifeboats were preempted by the crazed fishermen and quickly launched for the purpose of saving their frenzied occupants by rowing over to *Arctic*. One of the boats capsized in the process, but the other got away defying the captain's order to return. It was this boat with eight or ten occupants which, minutes later, was to be crushed under one of *Arctic's* 35-foot paddle wheels. All its occupants were drowned or beaten to death by the flailing buckets save one—a fisherman named Jassonet François. He survived double jeopardy for, first he managed to catch hold of a rope and haul himself to safety on board *Arctic* and later, when the liner sank, to survive two days drifting on a raft until he was picked up.

Soon after the collision, however, Captain Duchesne got things in hand and no more lapses of discipline were noted. Meanwhile, although the fore part of *Vesta* was in a horrible mess, it was observed with relief that the first watertight bulkhead was holding nicely and the ship had settled down by the head apparently as far as she was going to.

During this time Captain Duchesne took careful stock of the situation on board. By then, though, the true extent of her damage was known to *Arctic's* men and she was wallowing at best speed toward land in a futile race against time. Never was she seen again.

One man on board *Vesta* had been killed by the collision and there were others badly hurt who needed what limited attention their fellows were

⁷ Captain J. C. Luce's report to E. K. Collins from Quebec, dated 14 October 1854, printed in many contemporary newspapers as the *New-York Daily Times* and *The Herald*, New York, 16 October 1854.

able to give them. A muster of all hands showed twelve missing. These included the fear-crazed men who were in the boat destroyed by *Arctic* and others who had jumped overboard and tried to swim to her just after the collision.

Captain Duchesne's first order was to lighten the head of his vessel by every available means. All cargo, fish, gear, and passengers' effects in the fore part of *Vesta* was summarily dispatched over the side. This contrived to raise the bow somewhat and cutting away the foremast with its tangle of canvas and rigging eased the situation even more. Providentially, the bulkhead was still tight.⁸

Next was begun the task of reinforcing the iron partition by shoring it up from behind. All available bedding, including about 150 mattresses, pillasses (the sailor's traditional 'donkey breakfast' bedding) and other effects of crew and passengers were stacked behind the bulkhead and backed with boards and planks, the whole being secured with cables and firmly frapped around. A sail was let down over the bow and drawn in as close as could be over the jagged rent.

Captain Duchesne did not relish drifting around a potentially stormy stretch of open ocean. But he wanted to make all as secure as possible before adding the additional pressure to the bulkhead of getting his ship under way. And so for two days little *Vesta* licked her wounds and then, 'under small steam,' a course was laid for St. John's, some hundred miles distant. She arrived safely on 30 September and was moored at the end of the deep fiord-like harbor before the weather commenced to deteriorate as it did later that very day.⁹

All who observed the condition of *Vesta* on arrival at St. John's marveled that she should have survived at all and Captain Duchesne's 'indomitable energy, unwavering perseverance, and most superior seamanship' were justly praised.¹⁰ His ship's company was immediately provided for hospitably by a local French resident, M. Toussaint. But in many cases the unfortunate fishermen, who had with them all their little fortunes composed of barrels of oil and fish, were ruined when their possessions had to be jettisoned to lighten the ship.

Shortly after *Vesta* reached port, two incompletely loaded lifeboats from *Arctic* managed to get ashore at Broad Cove, now designated Cappa-hayden, on Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula, a dozen or so miles above Cape Race and some fifty miles south of St. John's. These boats were in

⁸ *The Herald*, New York, 15 October 1854.

⁹ *The Public Ledger*, St. John's, Newfoundland, 3 October 1854.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

the charge of Second Mate William Baalham who with forty-four of *Arctic's* more agile male passengers and crew sneaked away before the ship sank and so saved their skins.

Preliminary dispatches received in New York credited *Vesta* with picking up thirty-one *Arctic* survivors at sea.¹¹ Unfortunately this did not prove to be true, *Vesta* sighting nothing once the ships parted company. Later advices corrected the mistake, so reducing the already tragically slim number of those known to have survived.¹² The thirty-one men in question had been rescued by the bark *Huron* from still another lifeboat in charge of *Arctic's* Third Mate Francis Dorian.

Heretofore it has been at this point in the narrative that little *Vesta* has dropped out of the picture. Actually, there really is not much more of significance that can be added. The steamer was surveyed for repairs and in due course a new iron bow was built and fitted to her and a new foremast made. Meanwhile, on 20 October, the French navy dispatch boat *Cameleon*, a six-gun wooden paddle steamer, arrived at St. John's from St. Pierre for the purpose of repatriating *Vesta's* passengers. Capitaine de Frégate Barbet of *Cameleon* was reported in the stilted newspaper phraseology of the day to have 'personally inspected the *Vesta* on his arrival,' going on to report that he 'was utterly astonished how she could be conveyed to harbor.' The French naval officer 'passed a high encomium upon Captain Duchesne for the coolness and extraordinary presence of mind which must have influenced him throughout the perilous emergency caused by the melancholy collision with the *Arctic*.'¹³

The account concluded with the statement that Captain Barbet would 'strongly recommended Captain Duchesne to his government for distinction.'

Deservedly, in due course the recommendation was accepted. *Vesta's* master later was made chevalier of the Legion of Honor.¹⁴

Cameleon left St. John's on 22 October and Captain Duchesne and his crew settled down to await the completion of repairs. Evidently the men had little to do and one can readily appreciate the necessity that prompted Duchesne to insert a public notice in the newspapers to the effect that he would 'not be accountable for any debts contracted by the Crew of the steamer *Vesta* under my command.' This ran regularly in each issue of

¹¹ Dispatch received from Halifax dated 12 October 1854, in *The Weekly Herald*, New York, 14 October 1854.

¹² *The Herald*, New York, 15 October 1854.

¹³ *The (Newfoundland) Times*, St. John's, 28 October 1854.

¹⁴ Biographical note written on the back of a photograph of Captain Duchesne sent to the writer by the Chef de la Publicité, Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, Paris.

the Newfoundland *Times* from 28 October 1854 until 17 January 1855.¹⁵

Meanwhile work on the ship progressed through a mild winter. New bow plates were shaped at the foundry and machine shop of C. F. Bennett on Water Street and fitted to the ship under the supervision of a Mr. Kearney. Parenthetically, one can not but marvel at the skill and resourcefulness these ironworkers exhibited in this little, out-of-the-way spot and at this early stage in the technology of iron shipbuilding.

By the first part of March it was obvious that *Vesta's* repairs would soon be completed and that she could then return home. For the east-bound trip across the Atlantic several British officers and men of the local garrison planned to take passage, having been ordered up for duty in the Crimean War. Captain Martin Petrie of the Fourteenth Regiment was senior officer and, as master of St. John's Masonic Lodge No. 844, he entertained Captain Duchesne at a ceremonial farewell dinner and exercises at the lodge on 14 March 1855. Flowery speeches were addressed to 'Brother Alphonse' and eulogies exchanged during the presentation of a Masonic flag to the French seaman. The latter stated in turn that he 'only discharged his duty' in saving *Vesta* and that he would proudly fly the flag from her masthead on the return voyage.¹⁶

By 20 March, final farewells were made and *Vesta* departed hospitable St. John's bound for Liverpool carrying twenty-six passengers, officers and their families and various ratings from the garrison. The ship's departure was somewhat anticlimactic. After passing Cape Spear, she proceeded southward a short way along the edge of the ice floes and then was jammed in for twenty-four hours off Petty Harbor only a dozen miles or so from where her journey began.

One of the military passengers availed himself of the opportunity of sending a letter ashore to a friend to report on the trip so far. This was dated Bay Bulls, Wednesday, 3:00 P.M., 21 March and extracts were duly recorded by the press. The writer cited *Vesta's* arrival 'in a heavy snow storm' commenting further that 'Kearney's new bow has been well tested. . . . The vessel is perfectly tight. . . . Ice extends further than we can see.'¹⁷

This was the last word on *Vesta* to be received at Newfoundland for some time. Then the news percolated back that she had finally arrived in England after a 'severe and dangerous' passage of seventeen days from St. John's. Probably the source was the same anonymous military correspondent addressing his same Newfoundland friend. In any event, the

¹⁵ The (Newfoundland) *Times*, 28 October 1854, et seq.

¹⁶ *The Public Ledger*, St. John's, 20 March 1855 ('From the *Morning Post* of Saturday last,' i.e., 17 March 1855).

¹⁷ *The Public Ledger*, St. John's, 23 March 1855.

4 May 1855 issue of the *Public Ledger* carried lengthy extracts from another communication dated Liverpool, 13 April.¹⁸

According to this letter, *Vesta* got clear of the ice off Bay Bulls on 22 March and headed eastward toward the Banks to pass south of the Virgin Rocks. The next day, however, she

met a frightful gale of wind. . . . Not being able to lay to, we were obliged to run the way it was blowing. [They made 90 miles back toward Newfoundland.] This at night amongst ice, going ten knots in the hour, was frightful. On the 24th about 3 A.M. we were pooped and about an hour after we were struck by a dreadful sea which swept our deck of wheel, skylight, cookhouse, filled the cabin and engine-room and put the fires out, and all believed we were sinking. *The crew deserted us.*

What these mutinous gentlemen did or did not do was not further elucidated. However, the correspondent stated feelingly that there was 'but one seaman on board beside the Captain.' Evidently if the well-disciplined English soldiers had not turned to to help, *Vesta* might well have been lost.

After cutting away the anchor and pumping for eighteen hours without cease, the water in the hold was reduced 'sufficiently to get the fires to light and engines to work.' A consultation was then held to decide whether they should turn back for St. John's or attempt to continue the voyage. Anxiety was felt lest the new bow break off, but again evidences of Mr. Kearney's superior workmanship were demonstrated and, in the end, it was decided to go on. At that point the wind was favorable anyway.

Four days later they had 'another terrific gale' and again feared for their lives. But the staunch little *Vesta* weathered that storm too and managed to reach England at the beginning of the second week in April, 1855.

This, as far as is known, concludes specific word concerning the steamer and her movements. The trail is now confined merely to brief entries in various contemporary ship registers.¹⁹ From one it has been determined that she was acquired by the Cie. Générale Maritime of Havre on 11 June 1855, continuing to be registered out of Granville. In 1861 she passed to the ownership of the Cie. Générale Transatlantique. Two years later she was transferred to Spanish registry, being renamed *Ambres* and owned by J. Amann of Bilbao. Under her new name she continued to appear in various issues of the *Bureau Veritas* through 1878. However, the *Underwriters Register of Iron Vessels* covering the period 4 September 1874 to 31 August 1875 carried the cryptic note 'sunk in port of Santander.' For a

¹⁸ Ibid., 4 May 1855.

¹⁹ From information on file at the Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, supplied by Osgood Williams from data obtained from Alan B. Deitch, Henry de Cantelar and Ronald H. Parsons.

number of years she had plied between Antwerp and the northern part of Spain.²⁰

So ends our record of *Vesta*. After returning from Newfoundland, her skipper continued to follow the sea in ocean-going steam vessels of various types and in various services and he became one of the most highly respected officers in the French mercantile marine. Duchesne was master of the new steamship *Washington*, first of a new line to New York inaugurated in June of 1864. Five years later, he assumed command of *Pérelle*, then France's most magnificent liner, and was elevated to the rank of officer of the Legion of Honor—the only deep-water French shipmaster (capitaine au long cours) to enjoy this distinction. Captain Duchesne died on 4 October 1871 at the comparatively early age of forty-seven having followed the sea continuously since 1837 when he first signed on as a thirteen-year-old boy.²¹

A photograph of Captain Duchesne at the time he was master of *Washington* is in existence.²² But the only known contemporary view of *Vesta* is the little woodcut that was published in the *Illustrated London News* of 28 October 1854 showing her as she appeared on arrival at St. John's after the collision.²³ It is hoped that this account may stimulate further researches into the career of a rugged little vessel that has deserved better at the hands of posterity.

²⁰ *The Belgian Shiplover*, VI, No. 1 (January-February 1955), 9-10. Note by Ronald Parsons.

²¹ See note 14.

²² Ibid.

²³ *Illustrated London News*, 28 October 1854, p. 415. Reprinted THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE, XIV, No. 4 (October, 1954), Plate 29.

Alexander Crosby Brown, one of the original Editors of NEPTUNE and a frequent contributor to this journal, needs no introduction to our readers. The present article is one of the by-products of a trip he made in September, 1958, to Newfoundland, where he did research in the Gosling Memorial Library, St. John's.

CORRECTION

Charles F. Batchelder, Jr., has drawn our attention to the creation of a new 'ghost' whaleship in the article by Captain John Campbell, July 1959 issue of NEPTUNE, page 210. This is the whaler *Panther* caused by misreading Augustus D. Rogers' letter of 10 December 1841. 'This vessel must have been the bark *Pantheon*, of Fall River, Jabez J. Pell, Master, on her voyage of 1839-1842.'

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EVERYONE in the maritime museum field, as well as hosts of others, was saddened by the death in early August of Rear Admiral Evander Wallace Sylvester (U.S.N. Ret.), Director of the Mariners Museum. When Admiral Sylvester took the helm of the institution at Newport News, Virginia, after retiring from a long career in the Navy, by his energy and executive ability he brought a new enthusiasm to the staff of the Museum and added to its distinction, both nationally and internationally.

Admiral Sylvester, who was born 2 January 1899 in Alexandria, Louisiana, graduated third in his class of four hundred and sixty cadets from the United States Naval Academy in 1919. He received his promotion to Rear Admiral in 1946, when he took command of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. In 1950 he returned to Washington as Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Ships at Navy Headquarters and became Director of the Mariners' Museum in 1955, after his retirement from active service. His loss will be felt beyond his own institution, for it was one of his policies to keep in close touch with what was going on, and with scholars in other institutions with related interests.

Our penchant for anniversaries prompts us to draw attention to the fact that 1960 is the five hundredth anniversary of the death of Prince

Henry the Navigator, of Portugal. He was born in 1394 and died in 1460. He it was who developed Portugal's sea power to the foremost in Europe in its day, and his captains explored much of the west coast of Africa and discovered the Madeira Islands. His contributions to the art of navigation and geographic knowledge of the world are famous and began the period of exploration which reached its peak with Columbus' discovery of America and Vasco da Gama's voyage to India. In commemoration of Prince Henry this year the Portuguese government minted special coins and issued commemorative postage stamps.

Two Peabody Museum maritime books have been reprinted in the last couple of months. The abridged edition of Mary Celeste, The Odyssey of an Abandoned Ship by Charles Edey Fay, originally published by the Museum has been reissued with the Museum's permission by the Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company which carried the insurance on that unfortunate vessel. Charles G. Davis's The Built-Up Ship Model, the rights to which were acquired by the Museum when it took over the assets of the Marine Research Society, has just been reissued in an offset edition by the Caravan Book Service in New York. The work has long been out of print and in demand by model builders.

For the first time in the history of NEPTUNE a group of pages was printed out of order in A. C. Brown's article on the steamer Vesta in the July number. With this issue of the NEPTUNE we enclose the pages in correct order and numbering for those who wish to have their sets of NEPTUNE bound. The pages are indexed correctly.

ERNEST S. DODGE

Peabody Museum of Salem

The Marine Museums in Italy, Southern France and Spain

BY DOROTHY and M. V. BREWINGTON

ALTHOUGH the marine museums in England and northern Europe are well known to interested American travelers those to the south are seldom visited, primarily because they have been given little or no publicity. Taking a busman's holiday we recently made a visit to the western Mediterranean specifically to see its museums.

We had been told that Naples had a small but excellent collection of local fishing craft models and we knew from our collections in the States that many ship portraits had been painted in sight of Vesuvius and therefore expected to find a good group near its foot.

But no Neapolitan travel agency or guidebook could provide any information about a maritime collection. After we found ourselves well in the north of Italy we learned the collection is in the Museum San Martino. But what it may contain we do not know at firsthand. Perhaps some reader can report on it.

Even though Rome became a great maritime power, no museum in the city contains any collected group of materials. However, nearby—about twenty miles east of the city—is the Lake of Nemi, where as early as the fifteenth century two Roman vessels were discovered. Many attempts between 1446 to 1895 were made to raise the vessels, but all failed. In 1928-1929 after partially draining the lake the two craft well preserved by the fresh water were moved to high ground and a vast concrete building was constructed over them. Nemi is not far from Castel Gondolfo, the summer home of the Pope, easily accessible from Rome, but Nemi and the museum can be reached only by private car. The vessels were great double-enders 230-odd feet long and about 70 feet wide, possibly on one of which was built a temple dedicated to Diana, while the other served as a tender. The hulls were sheathed with cloth and then with lead plates. Anchors made of iron, encased in wood, with folding stocks and others made of wood with lead stocks and iron-shod arms were re-

covered and so was a large collection of mooring rings and bollard caps made of bronze in the form of animal heads, such as lions, tigers and wolves. Exquisite steering oar heads, rail stanchions, etc., all of beautifully worked bronze was also found. With these were cordage, roller-bearing capstans, bucket and lift pumps, bath fixtures, valves, pipes, a hot-water supply system, all of which demonstrates how little we have improved on some Roman designs. The actual vessels were burned, so the guidebooks state, by the German Army on its retreat after the Allied landings, but the true story remains to be told. To replace the vessels, however, very large-scale models have been built following the careful plans drawn by Doctor G. Ucelli when the vessels were recovered. These models, plus full-sized outlines made of aluminum tubing together with the recovered objects give a good idea of what the vessels were like. When we visited the museum we were the only persons there. Catalogues and photographs are available and a fine technical report with plans has been prepared.

Even though the city of Florence was never a maritime power, the Museo di Storia della Scienza is well worth a visit. Again no agency could even give directions for reaching it. Go to the Ponte Vecchio, walk a few hundred feet upstream to the Piazza del Giudici Palazzo Castellani and ring the bell. We were greeted by the custodian who with his small son, as no one else was in the museum, personally conducted us through. Neither spoke English, and our Italian would have given Dante a stroke, but the custodian and his little assistant demonstrated the use of almost every instrument in the collection with such a variety of gestures and signs that no language barrier seemed to exist. For those interested in early globes, telescopes, barometers, quadrants, plotting instruments and the like it should not be missed. No photographs are available, but an excellent though expensive catalogue is.

Italy's first real museum on our line of march was found in Venice: the Musco Storico Navale. When we visited the museum it was housed in a small building in the ancient Arsenal. It is to be moved to a much larger building on the Grand Canal, only a few minutes *walk* from the Piazza San Marco, or by vaporetto to Arsenale landing.

Here will be seen a fine collection of models, carvings, naval guns, the oldest group of *ex voto* paintings known to us, and many other objects of great interest including a ship's boat built in the yard of William H. Webb.¹ Of real importance is the series of local watercraft models. These

¹ G. B. Rubin de Cervin, 'A 26-foot American Cutter in the Naval Museum of Venice,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, XV (1955), 199-204.

are being built in the museum by a superb model builder under the eye of Baron G. B. Rubin de Cervin, the director. Each model is based on an actual boat from which lines and complete specifications are taken. The models are all 'built-up' using the same materials as the original. Probably no comparable area in the world has as many types of watercraft as Venice and when the series is completed no marine museum can produce as fine a collection of local craft. No catalogue is available but photographs of every object are. A few more objects of marine interest are in the Museo Correr in Piazza San Marco.

Almost in the center of northern Italy, far from the sea is Milan. One would hardly expect a marine museum here, but there are two and in addition the important collection of models of the inventions of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). All are housed in one building, the two marine museums in the basement and first floor, the Leonardo models in a gallery of their own. The museum is the Museo della Scienza e della Tecnica, Via San Vittore, 21. Here we were not lonely: the place swarmed with visitors of all ages. The marine collections are largely models, most of them good, with many actual objects. Instruments are well displayed in a gallery devoted to clock making, etc., but best of all are the models of Leonardo's inventions. Here are mechanically propelled vessels, harbor dredges, submersibles, multiple firing guns, pile drivers, 'secret weapons' of all sorts, and all of them practicable. These are superbly made, displayed and intelligible without a word of Italian. There is a well-illustrated catalogue of the Leonardo gallery but none of the two maritime sections.

Just as Venice was Queen of the Adriatic, so Genoa was ruler of the Western Italian Shore, and here in Italy's largest port is her largest museum. It is in a section of the city called Pegli, a half hour's bus ride from the main railroad station. The museum is well worth a visit, but go after lunch or take it with you and eat your bread, cheese, and drink your wine in the little park nearby. The museum is sadly neglected, but contains the most comprehensive collection in Italy. Once more we opened the museum and had it entirely to ourselves the whole day. Models are in profusion, some of them on a very large scale. Ship portraits cover the walls. Carvings, objects, relics, portolanos, instruments fill case after case. Labels are inadequate. No catalogue is to be had, but the Direction (in Genoa) will have photographs made on application. When I inquired why the museum was not brought to the public attention, I was told it was soon to be moved to new quarters; the answer to my question 'when' brought the words 'in the next century,' just tomorrow in a land where recorded dates begin about 800 B.C.

Traveling west into France the next museum was in Toulon—two of them in fact—one in the 'Tour Royale' where the attendant got sore because we interrupted his listening to a football game on the radio. We were sorry we bothered him—there was nothing of great interest; little more than two or three good carvings and an interesting gun. In the center of the city is Musée Naval de Toulon which is under the Marine Museum in Paris. This museum is catalogued and although the exhibits are badly crowded it contains many models worth seeing, a few pictures and portraits of naval characters. However, one gets the impression that if France's greatest naval base ever had an adequate collection it has been looted.

Scattered through the little seaports and fishing villages along the French coast are many churches which contain 'museum materials' of considerable interest; the models and paintings offered to the Virgin or to a patron saint as thanks for saving the donor from death in a shipwreck or accident. Very few of these *ex votos* are in good condition and one sees water colors by Antoine Roux covered with mildew, silverfish, and dirt, and some really good models of fishing craft and merchant vessels with broken spars and rotten rigging. Even so these collections are worthy of inspection for it was in a small church in Spain that one of the most important models extant, a fifteenth-century piece, now in the Prinz Hendrick Museum in Rotterdam, was found.

Marseilles is, of course, the most important seaport in France, and like most important ports in the States has no marine museum. There are several small collections in the city, the largest and best is that of the Chamber of Commerce, located not in the Chamber itself but in the Parc de l'Exposition. This museum is very well organized, clean and well lighted. With a good collection of models, paintings, and objects it tells the maritime history of the city and the development of the port in an interesting and fully documented manner. The Parc Borély Museum owns a few water colors by Antoine Roux, in bad condition unfortunately. There are in Marseilles many collections owned privately by business concerns and individuals, but generally speaking these are not open to the public. A specialized marine museum is in the making and from the quantity of materials available in the city it should be a good one.

Portugal and Spain, it will be recalled, once ruled the world's waters. A new museum is in the process of organization in Belem, a suburb of Lisbon, near the site from which Vasco da Gama sailed on the great voyage around Good Hope. The museum was not to be seen in April but will be opened in August.

In Spain there are two marine museums, one in Barcelona and one in Madrid. The first we reached is housed in the *Reales Atarazanas*, the ancient royal dockyard and arsenal, a huge structure begun in the thirteenth century. With great imagination, perfect taste and plan of organization the ancient building is being converted into one of the greatest marine museums in the world. There are sections devoted to fisheries, with models of Spanish local craft, photographs of fishing methods, and fishing life. An enormous room holds models, paintings, and objects relating to steam navigation. A third contains similar materials concerned with sail. A fourth is naval from oar through sail to steam. Other halls and rooms are concerned with instruments, charts of all ages, shipbuilding, rigging, yachting, foreign small craft in model and actual vessel. Since three ancient shipways are included in the arsenal, these are in the process of reconstruction and in two or three years will house a full-size naval galley, a full-size 'replica' of *Santa Maria*, and fishing vessels.

The museum has a library under a trained librarian, familiar with American library practices. A complete catalogue is in preparation and photographs will be made to order.

The second Spanish museum visited is in Madrid, at the moment housed in the Ministry of Marine, but about to move to larger quarters.² It is under the direction of Admiral Guillen y Tato, a man of great erudition, the author of many works on maritime history, who typifies all the grace and courtesy of Spain. The wealth of this collection is almost beyond conception in nearly every phase of marine history. For instance, among the first things one sees, is the chart drawn in 1500 by Juan de la Cosa who sailed with Columbus, showing the results of the voyages. Models of all sorts from primitive extra-European small craft, galleys, oar, sail and steam-powered men-of-war, paintings, instruments, weapons, crowded the museum. As one would expect, the museum has been fully catalogued, but since the collection will soon be moved, a new catalogue will be published as soon as the rearrangement is completed. Admiral Guillen has also been instrumental in publishing facsimiles of several of the great Spanish books on navigation, such as García de Palacio's *Instrucion Nautica*, Mexico City, 1587, taken from the museum's copy, one of the few known in the world, and Martín Cortes' *Breve Compendio de la sphaera y de la Arte de Navegar* . . . , Seville, 1551, again from the museum's copy.

In almost every museum visited there are at least one or two pieces with

² H. Philip Spratt, 'El Museo Naval de Madrid,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, XV (1955), 49-58.

American interest. Efforts are being made to obtain photographs of each for the reference files of the Peabody Museum.

And finally a word or two of advice to anyone planning to visit the museums. Write to ascertain exactly where the museum is located and when it is open. There are many days when they are closed and the hours of open days are unusual to American visitors. Do not fail to take a strong, wide-angle flashlight. Museums housed in ancient palaces, castles, and forts are seldom bright and airy. Only two of those visited should be considered adequately lighted and in a few the dust stirred by Caesar's marching legions still reposes on and in the exhibit cases.

The Brewingtons need no introduction to readers of NEPTUNE. M. V. Brewington was one of the founders of this journal and has been on its editorial board since its inception. He is also Assistant Director and Curator of Maritime History at the Peabody Museum of Salem. His wife, Dorothy, has worked closely with him on maritime research over the years.

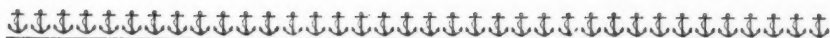


Note abstracted from a notarial record kept by Daniel Moulton of York, Maine, 1746-1784.

WRECKED OFF YORK HARBOR. On 7 November 1752, the schooner *Charming Molley*, Andrew Haskell, master, sailed from Squam on Cape Ann bound for Merryconeage at the Eastward. 'About one o'clock in the Afternoon of the same day it coming in thick of Fogg & being almost off with York Harbour they endeavoured to harbour there but the wind dying away they came to anchor . . . and at sunset there was no wind and the waether thick & dark and a very large Sea having free Passage over them & the water so shoal that they must inevitably rest upon the rock at low Water therefor they took to their boat and with great difficulty got on shoar a little to the Westward of York Harbour leaving the said schooner Riding with all her anchors out. And the declarants immediately went to the Neighbourhood for assistance to get the vessell into harbour but could not obtain their and She grounded upon the Rocks at Low Water & soon beat to pieces & most of Her thus came to Shoar before Twelve the same Night.'

Andrew Haskell, master, Josiah Lane, mate, and Daniel Davis, seaman, made oath to the above on 8 November 1752.

Contributed by L. W. Jenkins



Nathaniel T. Palmer's *Fleet of Great Schooners*

BY GEORGE A. BILLIAS

IN the 1880's, Bath, 'the city of ships,' turned to the construction of great schooners. These giant fore-and-aft-rigged vessels were a logical outgrowth of the evolution in schooner design that had been taking place throughout the nineteenth century. This long-term trend had been consistent: schooners grew larger in size; more masts were added; and length and tonnage were increased. Compared with the small, two-masted fore-and-afters of about 100 tons that Bath had built in the early 1800's, the schooners of the 1880's with their four masts and more than 1,000 tons were great indeed.

Nathaniel T. Palmer, young Bath shipbuilder, was one of those who pioneered in these Maine-made multimasted schooners.¹ Probably Palmer was attracted to these vessels for the same reason other men were adopting the great schooners—economy. In contrast to the square-riggers, those workhorses of the American merchant marine, the fore-and-afters did not require large crews to handle their sails. Indeed, the very simplicity of the schooner rigging made it possible to use steam winches and other labor-saving machinery to set sails and perform other tasks. One authority has concluded that the great schooners could be manned with 25 to 55 per cent less men than square-riggers of comparable size.² Steam power being cheaper than manpower, the great schooners became increasingly popular in the coastwise trade as well as on certain deep-sea trade routes.

Palmer, a man of courage, built the first of his schooners in the midst of the depression of 1893. He was also a shrewd businessman; it was reported that the vessel was built for \$50,000 but would have cost \$60,000 if constructed during 'busy times.'³ Hardheaded when it came to busi-

¹ For material submitted for this article, the author is indebted to Mrs. Hope S. Hersom of Bath, Maine, a descendant of Nathaniel T. Palmer.

² John G. B. Hutchins, *American Maritime Industries and Public Policy, 1789-1914* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 554.

³ *Bath Daily Times*, 23 March 1894.

ness, Palmer was softhearted when he came to name the schooner; he called her *Sarah E. Palmer* in honor of his wife.

The craft was built along big lines. Her length was 193 feet, her beam 40 feet, and her tonnage was 1,225 gross and 1,172 net. Palmer rigged her with four masts, and she took over 5,000 yards of canvas. Like the rest of the fleet of great schooners Palmer was to build, she was wooden hulled.⁴

Sarah E. Palmer was outfitted with the most modern equipment. For handling the cargo and sails, she was equipped with a steam engine and hoister. Her crew lived in steam-heated quarters, and the drudgery of many of their tasks was eliminated by the latest of windlass gear. Her donkey engine when tested took up 180 fathoms of two-inch chain in forty minutes, and steam power lifted her heavy anchors—the largest of which weighed 4,750 pounds—with ease.

In the last week of March, 1894, *Sarah E. Palmer* slid gracefully down the ways into the blue Kennebec.⁵ Her captain, H. W. Hammett of Providence, Rhode Island, was exceptionally well qualified; he had been in the coasting trade for fourteen years and not a single accident marred his record.⁶

Barely six months had elapsed before the ways smoked again as the second of Palmer's schooners started for the water. She was *Augustus Palmer* named after Nat's father. An 'exceedingly handsome' four-master, she was a first-class vessel in every respect. The best Bath could offer in the way of workmanship was lavished upon her. The same was true of the material that went into her. Each of her masts were of the finest Oregon pine, for by this time Maine had exhausted her stands of mast pines. Her cabins finished in cherry and ash were comfortable enough 'to suit the most fastidious.' She was almost the same dimensions as her predecessor; her length being 197 feet, beam 40 feet, and tonnage 1,287 gross and 1,236 net.⁷

On a rainy noon in mid-September, the great schooner was christened by having flowers strewn over her bow. Because she had been rigged while on the stocks, she was nearly ready for sea when launched. She was to be commanded by Captain Ellis E. Haskell of Chelsea, who had

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Bath Enterprise*, 28 March 1894.

⁶ *Bath Daily Times*, 23 March 1894.

⁷ Ibid., 15 September 1894.

had *Sarah Lawrence* for five years and who was reputed to be one of the best captains on the east coast.⁸

Palmer's third schooner, *Mary E. Palmer*, was the first vessel to be launched in Bath in 1895. A staunch, graceful 'four-poster,' the schooner was exceptionally well built. With an oak keel, a frame of oak and hackmatack, and planking of yellow pine she was sturdy enough to absorb the buffeting of heavy seas. She showed that Palmer was in keeping with the trend toward bigger as well as better schooners for her dimensions were 221 feet in length, 42 feet in breadth, and her tonnage was 1,526 gross and 1,455 net.⁹

The next vessel that Palmer built, *William B. Palmer*, was so large that the *Bath Daily Times* described her as the 'largest four-masted schooner in the world.'¹⁰ Her dimensions were truly prodigious. Her length registered 258 feet, but from the end of the spanker boom to the end of her jib boom she actually measured 370 feet. Her other dimensions were also of heroic proportions; her beam being 42 feet and the depth of her hold 20 feet. Her masts towered 116 feet above her decks, and her tonnage was 1,805 gross and 1,625 net.¹¹

Her hull was made of the best Virginia white oak and her planking and ceiling were made of Georgia pine. The vessel had double decks with the poop running forward of the mainmast. Once again, as he had done with most of his other schooners, Palmer turned *William B. Palmer* over to a Massachusetts captain, Frank A. Dyer of Waltham, when the craft was launched in February 1896.¹²

Palmer outdid himself the following year and built the first four-master in Bath registering over 2,000 tons. She was *Frank A. Palmer*, named after the builder's brother, and her gross tonnage was 2,014. Her length was 274 feet, her beam 43 feet and the depth of her hold 21 feet. She had a carrying capacity of approximately 3,500 tons. Her masts stretched skyward 118 feet and were 31 inches in diameter.¹³

The youthful builder pioneered in Bath not only in the size of great schooners but in adding to the number of their masts as well. In 1898, he built the first five-masted schooner in Bath, *Nathaniel T. Palmer*, which he named after himself. She was built exactly one decade after

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 26 March 1895.

¹⁰ Ibid., 29 February 1896.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 18 March 1897.

Leverett Storer of Waldoboro had launched *Governor Ames*, the first five-masted schooner constructed on the east coast.

Taking great care with the vessel that bore his name, Palmer spared no expense and she was reported to have cost \$92,800.¹⁴ Into her construction went some 550 tons of heavy oak, 875,000 feet of hard pine, and some 300 tons of iron. She was the largest as well as the last of the great Palmer schooners and she registered a record 2,440 tons.¹⁵

All of the schooners that Palmer built were noted for two prominent features; their proportionately large spread of canvas, and their graceful lines. *Frank A. Palmer* exemplified both these characteristics. Her total sail spread amounted to 8,400 yards, and her big spanker alone was 1,200 yards of the best Woodbury duck. That she was built along smart lines was undeniable. When she was launched in March 1897 a local newspaper described her as presenting 'the appearance more of a yacht than a merchant vessel.'¹⁶ Such a report might be discounted on grounds of civic pride, except that when she put into Portland a month later the press acknowledged she was 'the largest and most beautiful vessel Portland has ever seen.'¹⁷

This was not a matter of beauty for beauty's sake, but rather for purposes of economy. These features gave Palmer's schooners superior sailing qualities that resulted in considerable savings. By gaining a day or two over other vessels in trips made, Palmer could cut down on his operating expenses and increase his profits. The inherent virtue of the schooner rig was its superiority in sailing to the windward; coupled with the trim lines of the Palmer craft his fleet became formidable competitors in the carrying trade.

Because of their maneuverability and speed, most great schooners built around the turn of the century were used on the coasting trade, but Palmer had other ideas. Most of his fleet were engaged in foreign trade. Palmer was convinced that schooners were far better suited for this work than square-riggers.

A brief description of some of the ports visited and the products plied by the Palmer fleet in the year 1897 would serve to illustrate this point. The maiden trip of *Frank A. Palmer* was a run from Louisburg to Portland with a coal cargo. One of *Mary E. Palmer's* voyages found her sailing from New York to Dublin with oil and returning from London to

¹⁴ Ibid., 20 April 1934.

¹⁵ *Bath Independent*, 31 December 1898.

¹⁶ *Bath Times*, 18 March 1898.

¹⁷ *Portland Press*, 15 April 1897.

Philadelphia with chalk. *William B. Palmer* left from Baltimore to go to Antwerp with grain and other cargo, and she also returned from England with chalk. *Augustus Palmer* left Philadelphia with oil for Ireland and returned from the West Indies with salt.¹⁸

If savings resulted from speedy passages, then the Palmer fleet must have been profitable indeed. In 1896, *Sarah E. Palmer* made a round trip of 1,500 miles from Portland to Louisburg in the smart time of ten days which included the loading of a coal cargo of 1,950 tons.¹⁹ *Augustus Palmer* made a very quick passage from Delaware Breakwater to Limerick, Ireland, within fifteen days. While the captain of *William B. Palmer* reported that on the leg of one of her trips, his vessel 'passed everything we fell in company with, ships, barks, brigs, and tramp steamers.'²⁰

Besides their speed, the great schooners were noted for their ability to sail in all kinds of weather. One enthusiast was said to have remarked, 'Nothing but a hurricane can keep her in port; nothing but a flat calm can prevent her from making headway.'²¹ Palmer's vessels certainly lived up to their reputation in this respect. *William B. Palmer* in 1897 went through strong gales which her captain described as 'a perfect hurricane,' but, he added, 'she went through it like a bird.'²²

Despite the shining record set by his vessels, Palmer left the ship-building business with the same abruptness that had marked his entry. The fate of his famous fleet, however, is well known. *Sarah E. Palmer* was lost at sea and probably *Augustus Palmer* met with the same end.²³ Palmer was forced to sell the giant of his fleet, *Nathaniel T. Palmer*, to J. S. Winslow and Company in 1901 in order to raise funds to pay his taxes in Bath.²⁴ Gradually, he disposed of *Frank A. Palmer*, *Mary E. Palmer*, and *William B. Palmer* and stopped building ships entirely.²⁵

Perhaps it was just as well that Palmer got out of this business when he did, because he was spared the fate suffered by many other great schooner builders. Most of them fell before the keen competition of the ocean-going tug with its long string of barges which soon dominated the coasting trade. Economic, practical, and reliable, these steam tow barges offered as many advantages over the great schooners as the latter

¹⁸ *Bath Daily Times*, 18 March 1897.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24 November 1896.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 11 January 1897.

²¹ William H. Rose, *Maritime History of Maine* (New York, 1948), p. 242.

²² *Bath Times*, 11 January 1897.

²³ *Ibid.*, 4 April 1934, which contains an interview with Palmer.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 20 April 1934, also containing a personal interview with Nat Palmer.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

had held over the square-riggers. By 1910, the great schooners had fallen on lean days. Prosperity flared briefly for some that were still afloat during World War I; but their heyday was past, and with it closed another chapter in the history of the American merchant marine.

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Notes abstracted from a notarial record kept by Daniel Moulton of York, Maine, 1746-1784.

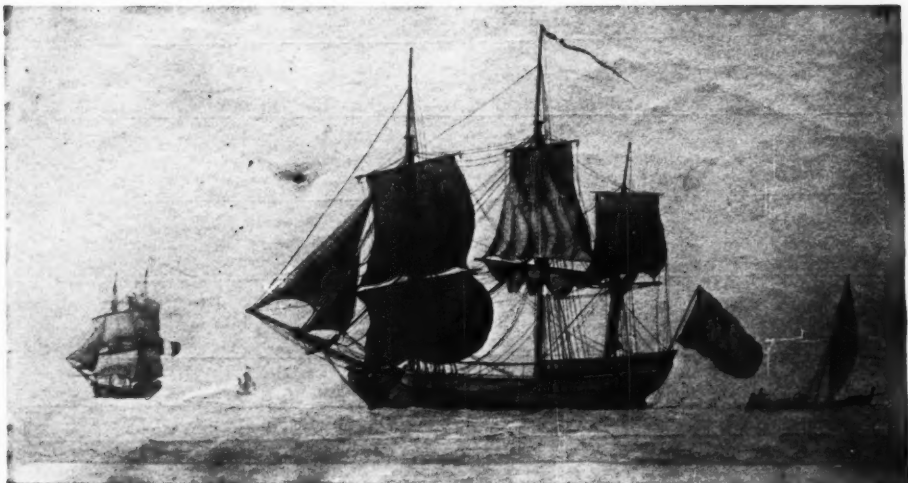
LOSS OF DECK LOAD. The sloop *Biddeford*, Gustavus Norwood, master, on its passage from a place called Madocock between Broad Bay and St. Georges, laden with cordwood, bound for Boston, on 23 November, off Cape Ann met with a strong and violent gale causing them to lay too under their Foresail and the wind blowing so excessive hard they were obliged to throw their deckload of wood overboard and put away before the wind under bare poles till about twelve O'clock the next day when heaving up her head to the Northward they lay too under a Ball'ce Reaf Main-sail till the morning when the wind being somewhat ceased they made sail for the Shoar and continued beating until the next day when they made Agamenticus and in the evening reached the Harbour of York with their Sales somewhat tore and damnified.

Gustavus Norwood, master, Jonathan Farnham, mate, and Zebadiah Banks, seaman, made oath to the above on 29 November 1749.

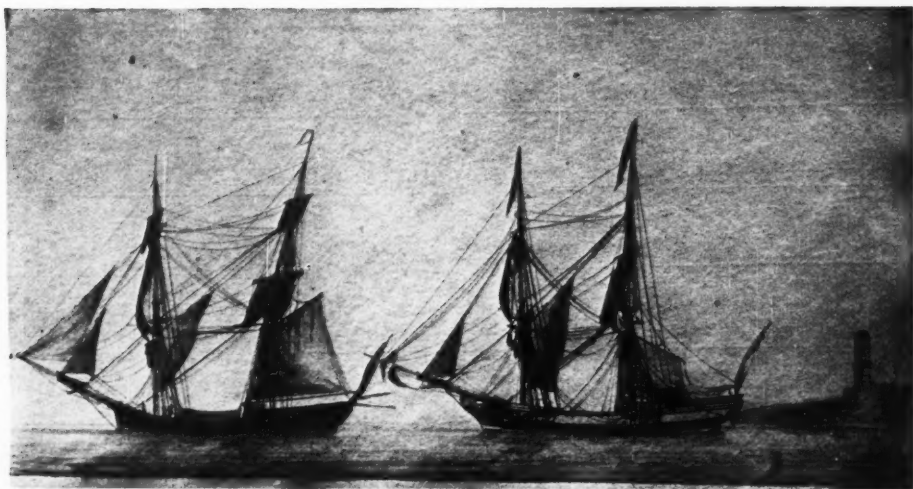
WRECKED ON KITTELY SHORE. On 20 January 1750 the sloop *Falmouth*, Joseph Cox, master, sailed from 'Falmouth in Casco Bay bound for Boston and about ten the next morning were off with the Isles of Shoals when the wind shifted to about south & obliged them to make away for Piscataqua Harbour where they anchored with both anchors ahead at about 4 P.M. & where they rode till about Noon the next day when by the violence of the Storm that arose the Evening before both their anchors came Home & the Vessel drave on Shoar on Kitterly Side of the Harbour & Bilged upon the rocks & by the violence of the Sea her upper works were carried away & part of her lading of Cord Wood lost.'

Joseph Cox, master, Moses Hodgkins, mate, Joseph Keen, seaman, made oath to the above on 24 January 1750.

Contributed by L. W. Jenkins



Venetian Ship off Marseilles.



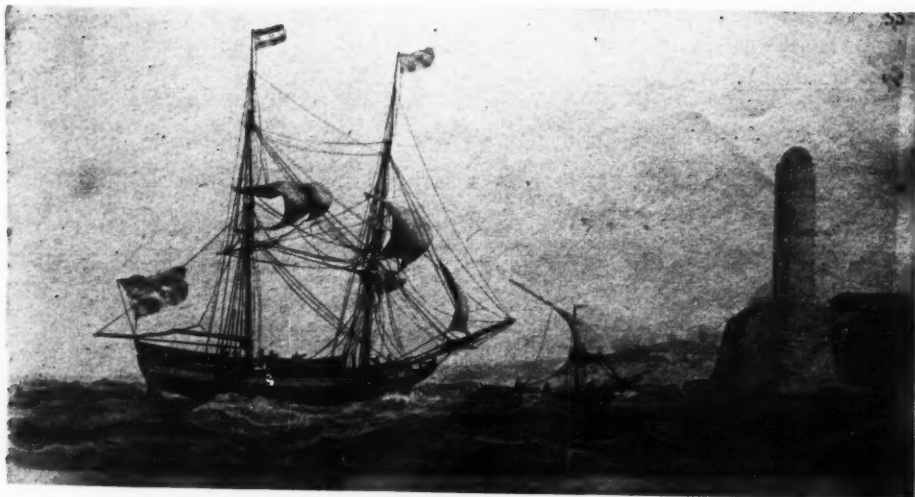
Two brigs becalmed.



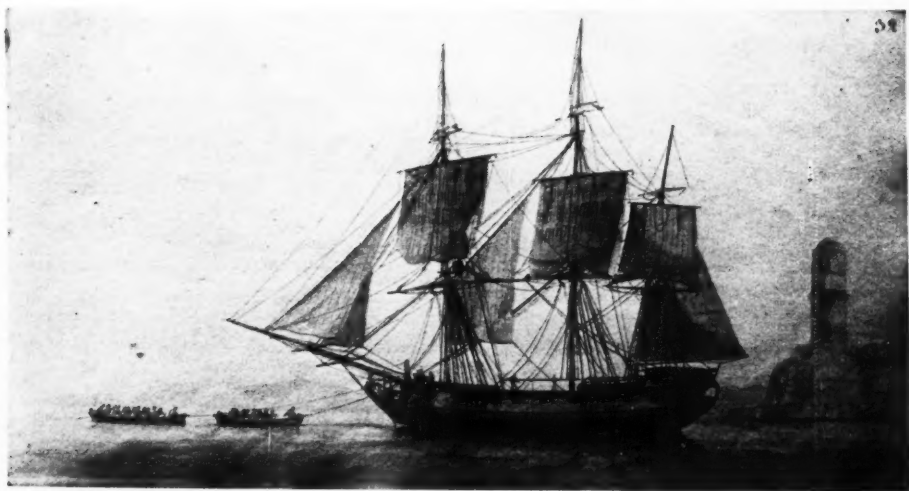
Brig and ship.



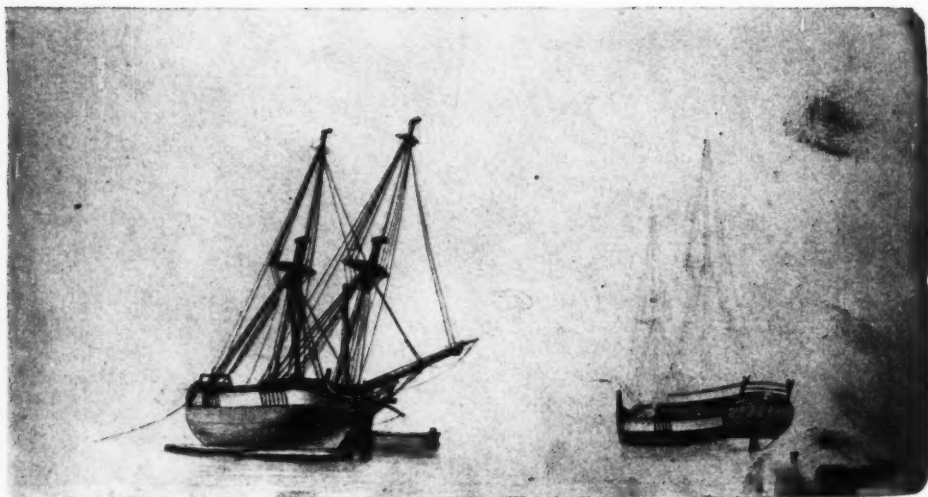
Danish brig at anchor in a gale.



Brig entering the Old Port.



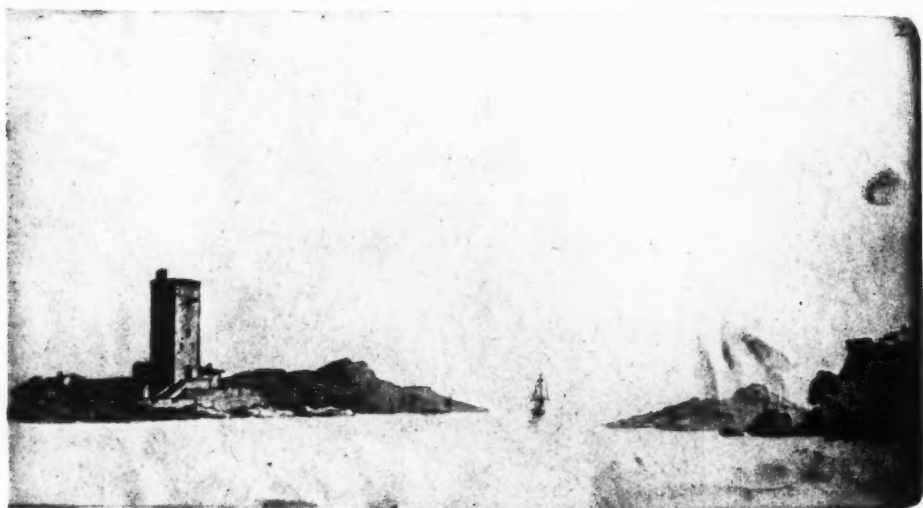
Ship towing out of the Old Port.



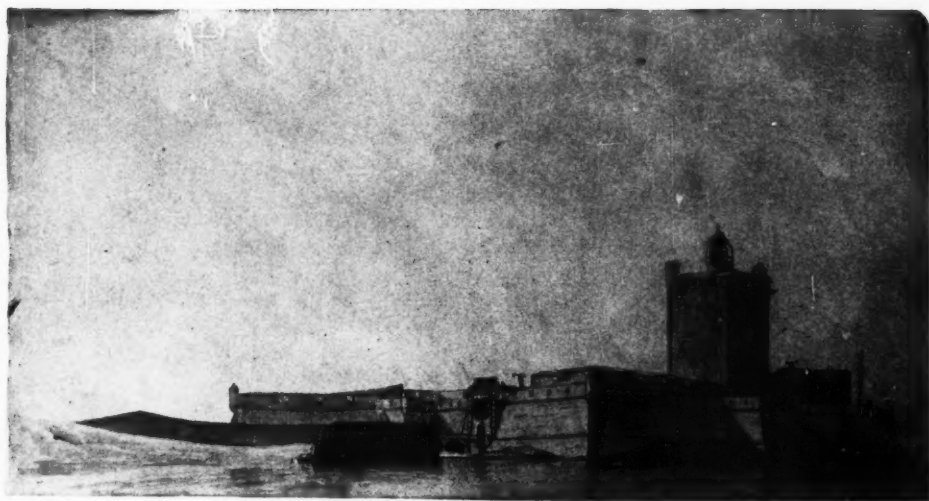
Brigs.



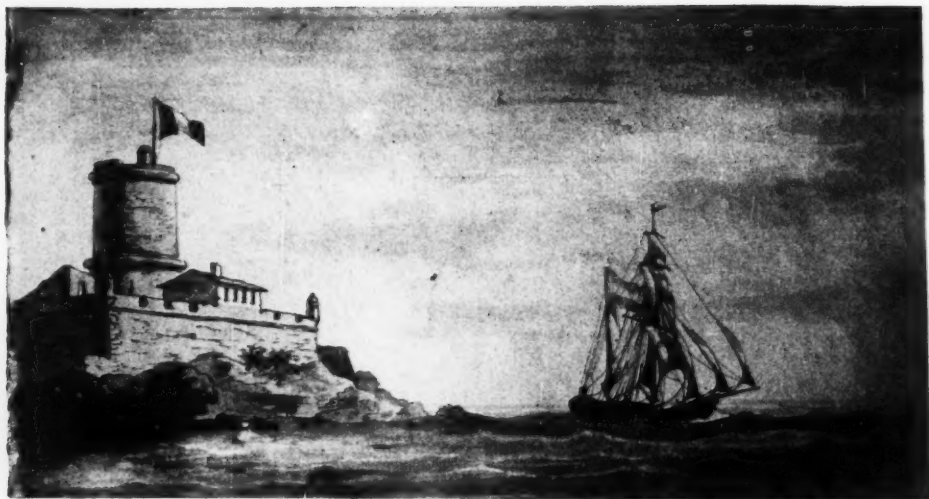
Ketch.



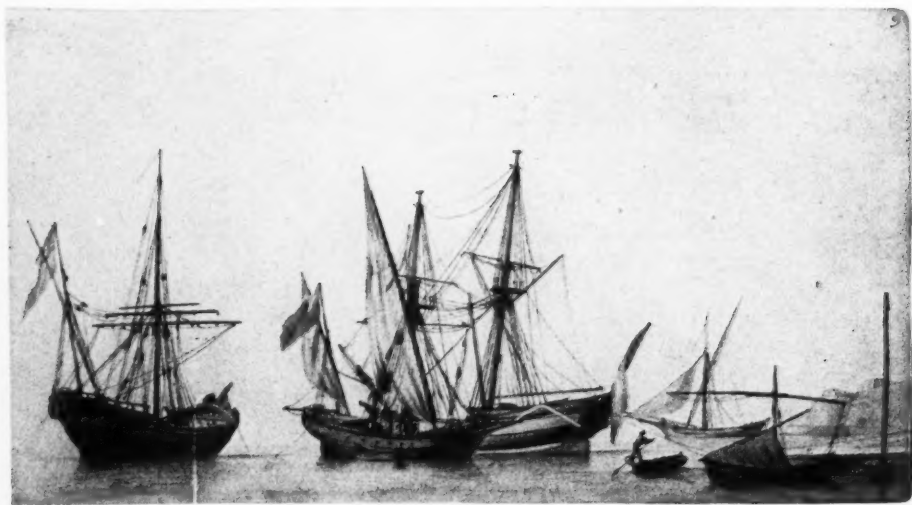
Unidentified fort.



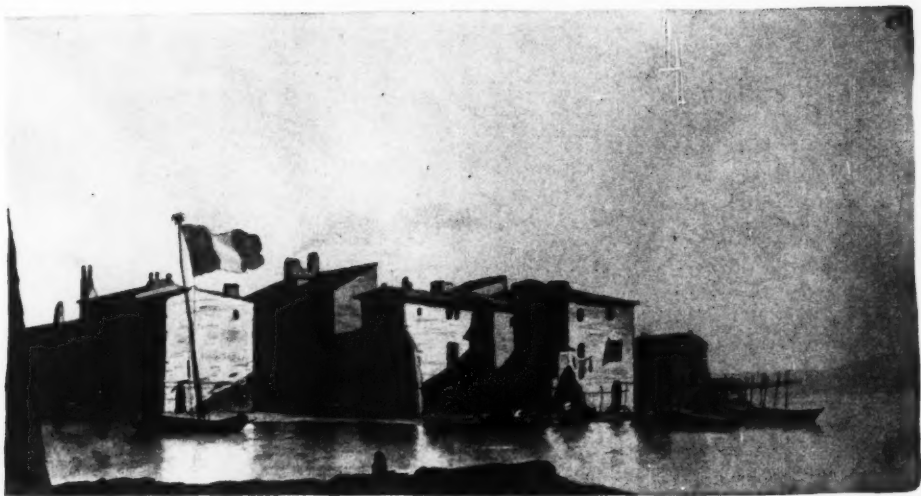
Unidentified fort.



Ketch passing a French fort.



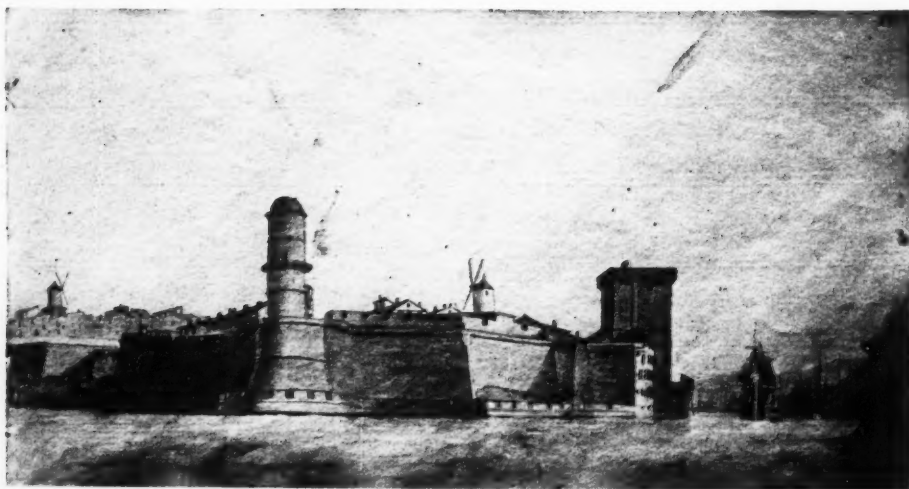
French Mediterranean shipping.



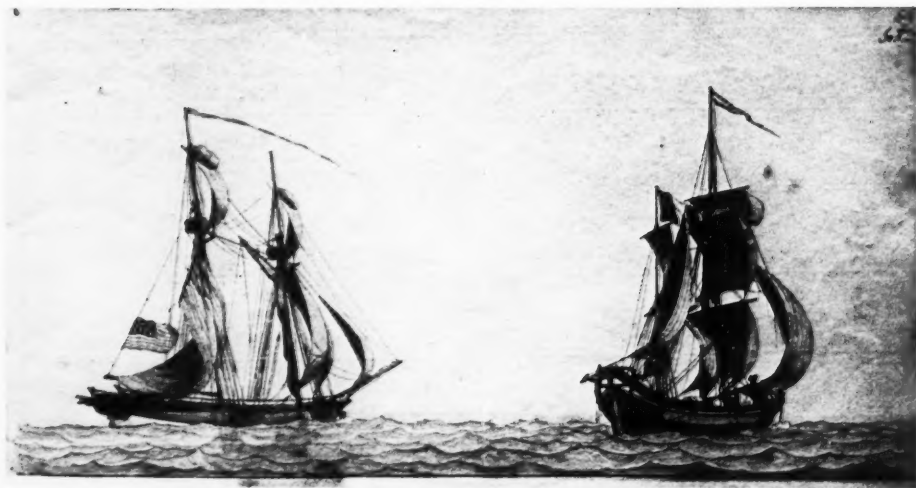
French fishing village.



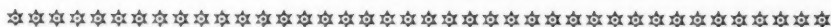
French coopers at work.



Entrance to the Old Port of Marseilles.



American topsail schooner and French pink.



An Account of the Scuttling of His Majesty's Armed Sloop Liberty

BY CONSTANCE D. SHERMAN

CAPTAIN William Reid was reputed to be zealous in his pursuit of American vessels harboring contraband cargo. He was therefore chosen to command the revenue vessel *Liberty*, which had been outfitted in Boston by the Commissioners of His Majesty's Revenue and sent to Rhode Island waters to examine any ship suspected of violating customs regulations.

Throughout the spring of 1769 the *New-London Gazette* made frequent references to this vessel and to her very unpopular master,¹ who was stationed there. On 21 April the paper contained a news item about a Massachusetts sloop which was seized with a quantity of wood and two tiers of molasses on board. The writer observed that, as the cutter remained in the Connecticut River, there was no doubt but that navigation in that area would undergo a thorough inspection.

The following week the cutter captured a sloop from Lyme which had two kegs of spirits and three raw hides on board. The next Friday's paper carried an account of Reid's seizure of a wood sloop bound from Long Island to Rhode Island. On 12 May we learn that *Liberty* had returned from a cruise up the Sound, and on the nineteenth the writer dedicated an entire article to her:

There has lately appeared off this Harbour, an illooking voracious Sea Monster, which has put all our Coasters upon a sharp look out, to steer clear of its devouring Jaws. It has been observed to devour whole Vessels at once; but some it has disgorged within an Hour after it has taken them; some it has kept down a Day, some two, and some a Week. But its Constitution is such, that it can keep down nothing long, which may perhaps be owing to some bad Vermin inhabiting its Stomach. It is particularly fond of all Sorts of West India Produce, Rum, Molasses, Sugar, Cotton, Coffee, Cocoa, etc.

¹ During the Revolution a British naval officer named Reid was captured in New London. He resigned his commission, entered the American navy, and married Miss Rebecca Chester in 1781. This may well have been the same man, for he was stationed for a time in New London and must have known her. See Henry A. Tirrell, 'Samuel Chester Reed,' *Records and Papers of the New London Historical Society* III, Part II, 251.

When it was first observed from Shore, by a great Number of people, there were various Conjectures what it could be; some said that it was an old Shipwreck'd HULL with a TON on it. One said when he first saw it, it looked like a P then like an AX with a clumsy Handle, and then like a TON for it kept altering every Moment. Another said it looked like a TEMPLE. Then an old aboriginal Native, who had been on a Hill for some Time viewing it, said he thought it looked like ROBINSON Crusoe and his Man Friday be KNIGHTED. After some time it drew near to the Shore, when they could observe it quite plain, they found it was a rotten BURCH Log, with a broken REED sticking in it for a Mast.

We hear the above Monster has since made its' Appearance in Newport Harbour.²

Nothing further appeared until Friday, 14 July, when the cutter returned from Newport. The writer then expressed the opinion that her name was a misnomer and that she should be christened *Slavery*. On that same day he vented his ire on the subject of the whole British Navy.

We hear the Liberty sloop, which sail'd a few days past on a cruize, has taken a prize, but of what nation, or whither bound, we have not learned; but imagine her to belong to some of the North American colonies, as the whole naval force of h-s Br-t-n-c M-j-y seems to be principally aimed against those colonies, notwithstanding they are inhabited by the best subjects that ever serv'd a king; most remarkable for loyalty and yielding obedience to every just and constitutional ACT of parliament.³

On the morning of 17 July 1769, Captain Reid entered Newport harbor with a brig and a sloop, which he had seized in Long Island Sound. The *New-London Gazette* states that the large brig, a vessel under command of Captain Joseph Packwood and belonging to New London,⁴ was on her way from Hispaniola to New York with a cargo of molasses. At five o'clock in the evening Captain Reed [*sic!*] boarded her in a piratical manner, ordered about half of her crew into their boat and abandoned them to the mercy of the sea.

On the evening of the same day the cutter captured the sloop *Sally* and carried her off,⁵ after setting most of her crew adrift in a leaky canoe, without bread or water.

Captain Reid escorted his prizes directly to the Newport customs house, but there his most earnest efforts failed to yield any evidence of illicit dealings. Captain Packwood, it appeared, had reported his full

² *The New-London Gazette*, Friday, 19 May 1769, p. 3, New London.

³ *Ibid.*, Friday, 14 July 1769, p. 3, Newport, 10 July.

⁴ A public house kept by Thomas Allen during the Revolution and reopened as the City Coffee House was next door to Captain Joseph Packwood's. See Frances Manwaring Caulkins, *History of New London Connecticut* (New London: the Author, 1860), p. 578.

⁵ Thomas S. Collier, 'The Revolutionary Privateers of Connecticut,' *Records and Papers of the New London County Historical Society*, Part IV, Vol. I (1893), 14, says that *Sally*, under command of Captain Howard, was a privateer sailing from New London in 1779.

cargo before sailing and had made no attempt to evade the customs charges.

That was a disappointment to Captain Reid, who had hoped to extort a goodly sum from the commander of the vessel. He was equally unsuccessful in his attempts to accuse Edward Finker, master of the sloop *Sally*, of bearing prohibited goods from New London.

On Wednesday afternoon, as no charge had been brought against his brig, Captain Packwood went on board to pick up his sword and some linen. The commanding officer (a boatswain from *Liberty*), and several other hands swore at him and endeavored to wrest the sword from his grasp. Packwood forced his way back to his boat, started for shore, but now the boatswain called upon *Liberty's* crew to fire. A brace of balls from a musket failed to reach their target. A swivel and a pistol were then loaded, but happily they too snapped or flashed, and Packwood reached shore unharmed.

A number of persons on shore had witnessed this extraordinary treatment of Captain Packwood. They had no fondness for Reid, who was notorious for his unwarranted seizures, and that night, meeting him on Long Wharf, they forced him to order all his men on shore from *Liberty* in order to ascertain who had fired on Captain Packwood. Reid sent for all hands save the mate. The party then boarded the obnoxious sloop, dismissed the mate, cut her cables, let her drift ashore near Long Wharf, cut away the mast, threw overboard everything of value, scuttled the vessel and burned her two boats. John Russell Bartlett gives a graphic description of this scene: 'The boats were burned on the Common, opposite the Pound. They were run up the Long Wharf, thence up the Parade, and through Broad Street, by the populace; and, when the boats passed up the Parade, it was with such rapidity, that, owing to the iron shoeing on their keels, they left a stream of fire in their rear, several feet long.'⁶ At the first high tide *Liberty* drifted over to Goat Island; then, during the night, a party of men from Newport crossed over to burn her. While all this was happening, *Sally* escaped from the harbor, and the brig sailed on Friday.

This destruction of *Liberty* constituted the first open resistance of the colonies to the authority of the British Government.⁷ On 21 July Governor Wanton issued a proclamation stating that as 'a number of people . . . being assembled in a riotous and tumultuous manner . . . did, with threats against his life, compel Captain William Reid . . . to order the people who had the keeping and charge of his vessel to come on shore, after

⁶ *Rhode Island Colonial Records* (Providence: Knowles, Anthony and Co., 1861), VI, 595.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 593.

which, a number of men boarded the said sloop and set at liberty a sloop brought into this port by the said William Reid, laden with prohibited goods, and under seizure, and she was afterwards carried away to the great prejudice of His Majesty,' and they then 'proceeded to destroy the sloop Liberty,' the governor therefore directed and required 'all the officers of justice in this colony to use their utmost endeavors to inquire after and discover the persons guilty of the aforesaid crimes, that they may be brought to justice.'⁸

That the Governor's proclamation was of no avail is apparent from an advertisement published by Richard Reeve, Secretary of the Commissioners of the Revenue on 28 August. Here there was no reference to the brig but solely to the 'cargo of prohibited goods' allegedly aboard *Sally*. The Secretary then continued:

. . . a great number of people riotously and tumultuously assembled together [this was borrowed, almost verbatim, from the Governor's proclamation] . . . having by force and arms attacked and secured the said Captain Reid and his men, and taken possession of both vessels, they set fire to, and sunk the *Liberty* and carried off the sloop *Sally*.

For the apprehending and bringing to condign punishment, the persons concerned in this daring and atrocious outrage, the commissioners of His Majesty's customs, do hereby promise a reward of £100, sterling, to any person or persons, who shall inform against any of the offender or offenders (except Nathaniel Shaw,⁹ Joseph Packwood and—Angell¹⁰) to be paid on his or their conviction.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid., p. 596.

⁹ Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., was at the time the most distinguished merchant in New London. His father, as a young man, had commanded a ship which plied between Connecticut and Ireland. On 20 July 1758 Nathaniel, Jr., married Lucretia Harris Rogers (widow of Captain Josiah Rogers). In 1767 he presented to the town of New London its first fire engine. He carried on an extensive banking business and owned a number of vessels. It was not surprising therefore that he ran afoul of the British customs regulations, since shipowners often could not afford to pay the taxes levied on sugar and indigo. On 17 March 1769 the *New-London Gazette* reported that on 'Tuesday last the Officers of his Majesty's Customs for this port made a seizure of 28 hogsheads of rum, belonging to a gentleman of this town.' On 7 April Duncan Stewart, collector of customs, announced that 'the store of Mr. Nathaniel Shaw had been broken open and 28 hogsheads of foreign rum carried away.' This theft was conveniently arranged to free Mr. Shaw of any difficulties involved in the illegal importation of the rum. A week later Governor Pitkin of Connecticut called on all officers to aid in finding the offenders.

Still smarting from this indignity, Mr. Shaw regarded *Liberty* with a jaundiced eye. On 15 May 1769 he wrote to a friend: 'The sloop *Liberty* . . . searches every vessel in the strictest manner,' and again, 'Our cruising pirate sailed yesterday for Newport.' [Frances Caulkins, op. cit., p. 489.]

Nathaniel Shaw was injured on a duck-hunting trip 15 April 1782 when his own fowling piece was discharged accidentally. He died two days later. With him in the boat was Captain James Angel, who was probably a member of the crew of one of his vessels before the Revolution. It is quite possible that he served on either Captain Packwood's brig or on *Sally*, both of which came from New London and both of which probably belonged to Shaw. During the Revolution Angel was a lieutenant on the brig *Defence*, a 14-gun vessel built by Connecticut. He died in a marine disaster in 1794.

¹⁰ *Rhode Island Colonial Records*, VI, 593.

The newspapers of the time were full of accounts of *Liberty*. On 31 July the *Newport Mercury* reported that the vessel was grounded at the north end of Goat Island near the spot where the pirates were buried.¹¹ 'What this prognosticates,' the writer continued, 'we leave to the determination of astrologers.' Consultation of the stars evidently did not require a long interval, for the next issue of the paper (August 7) recorded that *Liberty* had caught on fire and continued burning for several days, until she was almost entirely consumed.

On 21 July 1769 an unknown writer sent the following account to Messrs. Edes and Gill, editors of the *Boston Gazette*. They declined to publish it, probably because they feared to antagonize their British readers, but the manuscript has been preserved,¹² and it mirrors the ire aroused by illicit British seizures more clearly than any other pre-Revolutionary document.

A few days ago an armed Sloop in the service of the Revenue, preposterously and insolently named *Liberty*, appointed by the Commrs of ye Customs and commanded by the famous or rather infamous William Reid, arrived at this port from a cruise, and brought in with her a brigantine from the West Indies bound to New York, and commanded by Packwood, and a sloop. Her voyage and Capts. name are both unknown to the writer of this advertisement. Both belonging to and taken off New London. (On the same cruise the vigilant Reid took one of the Providence Packet boats and sent her to Boston or Halifax.)

Last Wednesday in the afternoon Capt. Packwood went on board his brig in order to take ashore his wearing apparell [*sic!*] and finding his things turned out off [*sic!*] his cabbin [*sic!*] he manifested his surprise at it to the officer of the cutter who had the charge of the brig, and asked him what it meant. The officer damned him; told him that he had a right to do what he pleased on board that vessel; that he (Packwood) should not carry anything out of her, and treated him with such abusive, scandalous, threatening language, that Capt. Packwood unable any longer to bear such intolerable abuse drew his sword, which he had just taken out off the cabbin, and told him that if he persisted in his insolent behaviour he would infallibly run him through.

The puissant boatswain now thought it best to haul in his horns, and permit Capt. Packwood to take his cloaths into his boat, but he had no sooner left the brigantine's side before the said boatswain resuming his courage, hailed the cutter and ordered her to fire upon that damned rascal in the boat. The arms chest was opened at once and a musket fired at Packwood's head which would infallibly have

¹¹ Twenty-six pirates were hanged in Newport on Friday, 19 July 1723 at Bull's [Gravelly] Point opposite the town. This was the largest pirate hanging ever to take place in New England. See *The Tryals of Thirty-six Persons for Piracy* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1723) and Richard Le Baron Bowen, *R. I. Colonial Money and its Counterfeiting 1647-1726* (Providence: Society of Colonial Wars, 1942), pp. 69-70.

¹² 'An Account of the destruction of His Majesty's Armed Sloop *Liberty* at Newport. R. I. July 1769.' I am grateful to the Board of Directors of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum for permission to publish this manuscript which is catalogued as MRQEY / AC.

demolished him had the person who discharged the piece been as skillful as he was malicious, but his aim luckily being point blank, and the boat being in quick motion the ball just passed his head and Packwood got safe to the Long Wharf, near which the cutter and ye brig were both anchored.

Several persons were at the head of the wharff when this action was perpetrated. An account of it was soon communicated, and a number of people collected on the wharff.

This astonishing instance of outrage and barbarity!

The full view of the two vessells which Capt. Reid had but just brought into port, and was practicing every diabolical art in his power to have sacrificed to a set of hungry officers, and his own rapacity; the idea of his infamously pimping about and peeking into every creek and corner in our river, where his barge could be introduced, and stopping almost every boat that passed, and his manifest determined resolution to distress and harass trade to the utmost of his power (and the severity, partiality, malice and prejudice of the Collector of the Customs occasioned only by the merchants refusing to pay him higher fees than by law were allowed).

All these ideas at once took possession of the minds of the people and inflamed their resentment. They soon determined that satisfaction should be made to Capt. Packwood, and that a temporary check at least should be given to the mercenary, piratical conduct of Capt. Reid.

At this instant, in the dusk of the evening, Capt. Reid and his wife came down the wharff in order to go aboard his sloop. The crowd surrounded them, inducted them into an house, and demanded satisfaction of him for the insolent abuse just offered to Capt. Packwood; reproached him with offering two of Capt. Packwood's sailors a large sum to swear that he had broke bulk before he was taken, and with many other of his low dirty actions. Terrified at his situation and conscious of his guilt, as other miscreants had done, Reid fell upon his knees and began to make solemn protestations of his innocence (thinking thereby to appease the people) but he was interrupted, told to stand up upon his feet; that nobody intended an injury to his person; and that nothing was required of him but this: that he would deliver up the person who fired at Capt. Packwood. This he readily consented to, and accordingly ordered his men on shore.

As soon as they were landed, part of the people hauled up the Liberty's boats, carried them off and burnt them, and part of them went on board Liberty sloop, cut her cable, and let her go ashore, when they went to work deliberately and scuttled, dismasted, stripped and dismantled her.

While these things were transacting, the sloop which was brought in by the cutter weighed anchor and went out of the harbor. The stillness of the people during this affair was very remarkable, and it is extremely happy that no injury was offered to the person of Capt. Reid, nor indecency to his wife, nor violence to any of his crew.

It is hoped that Capt. Reid, now he is unshipped will think seriously of the danger to which his opprobrious conduct hath exposed him, weigh well the consequences of incurring the universal resentment of an abused, oppressed people, and determine for the future to enter upon some employment worthy of a man,

and no longer disgrace and degrade himself by continuing to be an infamous detested tool, pimp and informer to a Board whose haughty, imperious, arbitrary behaviour have rendered them ridiculous and contemptible.

P.S. Capt. Packwood's brig was cleared out at the Custom House the next day and sailed for New York.

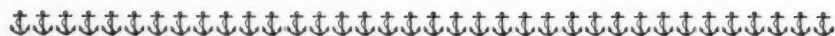
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Note abstracted from a notarial record kept by Daniel Moulton of York, Maine, 1746-1784.

CONTRACT TO BUILD A BRIGANTINE. On 20 January 1752, Samuel Pitts of Tingmouth, county Devon, England, covenanted with Clement Dearing of Kittery, to build a brigantine of 'Forty Four Feet Keel, Nineteen Feet Beam, Eight Feet Hold, Three Feet & Ten inches between Decks to have a Full proportion of Rake forward & aft to have a Rise forward for a Fore Castle with a Beam grubbed down with a proper Depth, another Beam grubbed down to lay the Quarter Deck on, to have a close Gunel fore & aft, to have eight Inches Waste, all proper Wales as ever put in such a Vessel, to have a Strake of Plank work'd all round the Vessel of Three inch both within side & out above the wales & another on the Prong heads of the same thickness . . . all the Plank to be good sound Oak except the Decks which are to be good sound White Pine full two inches thick to have not Butts in the Upper Deck her Water Ways to be White Oak well grubbed down to build ahead, to put up handsome & strong Stanchants for Six Gun Ports on the Quarter Deck & handsomely to put up all rails brestwork, to find & make all Masts Yards Bowsprit caps Ensign, Pack [sic] & Pendant Staffs . . . with all Lumb'r & Ballast Ports, the Vessel to have a long floor to carry her Breadth well forward, the Tree Nails to be Drove in Tar to Stock two or three anchors to drive Three Threads of Oacum in every Seam to Caulk recaulk & Grave her & to do all Carpenters work even to a Cleat.' Pitts was to supply all Ironwork, pitch, tar, Oakum and joiners work and to pay £312.5.0 $\frac{1}{3}$ at the signing of the contract, $\frac{1}{3}$ when the lower deck was laid, and $\frac{1}{3}$ when the vessel was launched which was to be done on or before 10 May 1752.

Contributed by L. W. Jenkins



Early Great Lakes Steamboats

The Last Years of the Hard Times

1842-1843

BY H. A. MUSHAM

THE improvement in business in the lakes country during the fall of 1841, occasioned by the rise in the price of wheat and other grains, and their movement to the east, faded as the season closed, and 1842 opened with the times harder than ever before.

Shipbuilding remained at a low level on Lake Erie but five new steamboats were built, four American and one Canadian. Of the American, *Ben Franklin*, 231 tons, was built at Algonac, Michigan; *John Owen*, 230 tons, at Detroit for use as a towboat, and the propeller *Samson*, 250 tons, at Perrysburg. The Canadian was the steam scow *Sans Pareil* built at Chatham.¹ On Lake Ontario the situation was somewhat better, six boats coming out, four Canadian and two American. Of the Canadian, *Chief Justice Robinson* was alone noteworthy because of her unusual ram-bow model.² The others were *Administrator*, 400 tons, built at Niagara along with *Chief Justice Robinson*, *Dispatch*, 200 tons, built at Kingston, and *Welland*, 300 tons, built at Bath. Both of the American boats were noteworthy and were built at Oswego. One, *Chicago*, 150 tons, was a propeller built by Sylvester Doolittle. The other, *Lady of the Lake*, 423 tons, the first steamer on Lake Ontario with an upper cabin, was built by George Weeks at his yard on the east bank of the Oswego River at its mouth.

There was but little change in the service offered on Lake Ontario by both Canadian and American boats during the season. Emigrants were brought up the St. Lawrence to Prescott and Ogdensburg by Durham boat, stage and steamboats where they changed to steamers which took them to Kingston, Oswego, and to ports on the Niagara and at the west end of the lake. Oswego with its propellers now had a real advantage in upper lakes trade. With *Vandalia* and *Chicago* a through steamboat serv-

¹ Fred Coyne Hamil, 'Early Shipping and Local Transportation on the Lower Thames,' *Papers and Records*, Ontario Historical Society (Toronto, 1942), XXXIV, 55.

² H. A. Musham, 'Early Great Lakes Steamboats, Warships and Iron Hulls,' *AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, VIII, No. 2 (April 1948), 148-149, 134-135.

ice was offered to Chicago via the Welland Canal, by-passing Buffalo, and at rates that were considerably less than from that port.

At Chicago the season opened with a ray of hope for better times. Three new grain storehouses had been built during the winter, one, that of Messrs. H. Norton & Co., the largest, located on the old Fort Dearborn reservation, was 100 feet long by 40 feet wide, and four stories high on the river side. Five more were to be built during the season.³ There were 100,000 bushels of grain in storage waiting transshipment. The roads were drying and more was expected to come in.⁴ The season opened early; the first steamer to reach Chicago was *Chesapeake* which arrived on 28 March. It was the earliest arrival from below in the memory of the citizens. Several alterations had been made in her and much to her improvement, the principal of which was an upper-deck cabin. She left the same day for Buffalo.⁵

On Lake Erie, *General Scott* on the way from Detroit to Buffalo found eighteen miles of ice outside of Buffalo, worked her way through six of them, landed her passengers twelve miles distant on the Canadian shore, and received others westbound from Buffalo by wagon.⁶ She then returned to Detroit and again had to work her way through ice, this time nine miles of it.⁷ *Vermillion*, Chicago bound from Buffalo, sustained an injury to her engine on the St. Clair River and was forced to return to Detroit for repairs. She finally reached Chicago on 4 April and left the next day. She had been thoroughly renovated and painted and presented a fine appearance.⁸

The shipping business at Chicago, however, was in a bad way; twenty-nine vessels were lying at the wharves, the larger portion being of good size. It was an unusual spectacle for this time of the year. Cargoes were scarce and freight rates were low. Delay in opening of Erie Canal was given as part reason for this condition.⁹

The combination swung into action with a reduction of twenty-five per cent in passenger and freight rates. The *Daily Chicago American* for 6 April 1842, commented: 'the reduction is made to correspond with the changes of the times, and the rates are none too low now. We understand the combination does not commence operations until the middle of April.

³ *Daily Chicago American*, 18 March 1842.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 22 March 1842.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 23, 28 March 1842.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1 April 1842.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 2 April 1842.

⁸ *Detroit Advertiser*, 30 March 1842. *Daily Chicago American*, 29 March, 4, 5 April 1842.

⁹ *Daily Chicago American*, 9 April 1842.

Meanwhile the boats run on their own hook.' Eight boats were put on the Chicago Line, giving sailings from Buffalo and Chicago every other day.

The first loss of the season occurred on the night of 1 May, when *Commodore Barrie*, bound from Niagara to Kingston was run afoul by the schooner *Canada* nearly opposite Presqu'Isle 30 miles offshore and sunk in 60 fathoms of water. The crew and passengers were nearly all saved, but the vessel and cargo, nearly 500 barrels of flour, were a total loss.¹⁰

The combination ran into opposition. Fares between Detroit and Buffalo were cut to \$4.00 by *Huron*, Captain Ward. She did not lack for patronage, taking most of the passengers on the days of departure from both ports.¹¹ The Michigan route to Chicago, that across the state between Detroit and St. Joseph, with the westward extension of the Michigan Central, now was growing in importance. The railroad had reached Jackson in January, where stages continued the route on to St. Joseph. But there had been no regular service across the lake since 1840, *James Allen* and *George W. Dole* having been laid up in the Chicago River since then. The Ward interests secured the contract for carrying the mails across the lake and put *Huron* on that part of the route to ply regularly between Chicago and St. Joseph, leaving each port on alternate days. The fare between Detroit and Chicago, rail, stage, and boat, was \$12.50 at first but was later reduced to \$10.00.¹²

Cahoon's pier at Southport was finished during the season. It was quite an innovation in harbor facilities and the smart boys ridiculed it. One, Captain Randall, master of *Wisconsin*, was challenged to prove his point—that it was too fragile to stand up. He made fast his best lines to it and started his boat. The pier held showing no perceptible motion, but his lines parted.¹³

The dullness of the spring at Chicago was enlivened according to the *Daily Chicago American* for 26 May by an 'ARRIVAL EXTRAORDINARY—Our epicures were thrown into an intense excitement by the arrival in this city on yesterday afternoon per steamer *Chesapeake* of a lobster,—a real lobster, claws, shell and all as perfect as when taken fresh and dripping from the briny element. This is doubtless the first one which has made its appearance in Chicago, and we devoutly hope it will be the harbinger of—other lobsters. Our distinguished visitor, it seems was brought in good

¹⁰ J. Ross Robertson, *Robertson's Landmarks of Toronto* (Toronto, 1896), II, 877; James Van Cleave, 'Reminiscences of Early Sailing Vessels and Steamboats on Lake Ontario,' manuscript in Chicago Historical Society, p. 59.

¹¹ *Daily Chicago American*, 21 May 1842.

¹² *Ibid.*, 27 May; 9, 18 July 1842.

¹³ *History of the Great Lakes, Illustrated* (Chicago: J. H. Beers, 1899), I, 343.

health and spirits to Cleveland, where like another distinguished character, it was "tumbled into the pot," boiled and then transported to this city. It was as fresh as could be desired.'

James Madison came in on the evening of the twenty-seventh, not with a lobster, but with a large freight and between 400 and 500 passengers. Remarked the *Daily Chicago American* for the next day: 'Considering the price of wheat, we will be surprised if thousands and tens of thousands of our Eastern friends were not anxious to seek fertile lands of the west.'

Indiana replaced *Wisconsin* on the Chicago Line late in June, and arrived at Chicago on 1 July. The passengers were delighted with the treatment received from Captain Pheatt and his officers and by their skill as sailors during the passage which was made in unusually quick time though the weather was boisterous and there was a detention of twenty-four hours. Thirty-three signed a card published in the *Daily Chicago American* for that date, expressing their warmest thanks, and recommending *Indiana* 'as a safe, expeditious and commodious boat for travellers with a range of light airy cabins elevated above the deck, surrounded with large and ventilated and commodious staterooms, more like a gentlemen's dressing room, than ordinary staterooms of most boats, combining the comforts of home with the luxury of a floating palace. . . . During the hardest blow, she moved with the gracefulness of a swan, and the nimbleness of the dolphin, over the waters, rolling so little as scarcely to create any sea sickness. Her accomodations, in our opinion are not excelled by any boat on the lakes. The culinary department is conducted in a manner that cannot but please the most fastidious epicures; and in fact every department is managed in a manner most admirably adopted to win the "golden opinions" of the public. In thus expressing our sentiments we have the satisfaction to know that it is not all romance as it is sanctioned by "Shiver the Mizzen" better known as Commodore Blake of the Upper Lakes, who is a fellow traveller with us.'

Kent ran mainly this year between Port Stanley and Buffalo, giving a very convenient trans-lake service. On 3 July, her engine broke down and she was towed into Port Colborne by H.M.S. *Minos*.¹⁴

Illinois and *Great Western* collided near the Manitou in early August. The stem and plank-sheer of *Illinois* were started, the figurehead split, rail broken, and some other upper works injured. *Great Western* was seriously injured; timbers were sprung and bulwarks torn away. She leaked so much that heavy articles were shifted to the stern, as well as the wood

¹⁴ Hamil, op. cit., p. 55.

taken on at the Manitou, to elevate the bow. She then proceeded on her way to Buffalo. The engines of both boats had been stopped, but the shock was so great that Captain Douglas of the brig *Virginia*, a passenger on *Great Western*, was thrown onto the deck of *Illinois* and considerably injured. *Illinois* continued on to Chicago. The collision was wholly accidental. Later examination of *Great Western* showed that the damage was not as serious as it was first thought. She was able to make her trip to Chicago.¹⁵

Two very small craft, one *Commodore Blake* named after Captain Chesley Blake of *Illinois*, were reported by the *Daily Chicago American* for 2 September as plying regularly this season, as packets between Michigan City and Chicago, carrying passengers and freight. The report is not explicit as to their means of propulsion, but implies that it was steam, especially for *Commodore Blake*. This boat had a tonnage of five. If she was steam propelled, it made her the smallest steamboat on the lake to that date.

The wreck of the ill-fated *Erie* was a lure to many fortune seekers, because of the large amount of specie she was supposed to have carried when destroyed by fire the previous 9 August. Late in June, Captain Taylor and associates, with some of the survivors, went out to the scene of the disaster in *Star* to locate the wreck, but were not successful. They had not consulted those aboard *DeWitt Clinton*, *Lady* and *Chautauque*, where she sank as she was being towed in. They returned to Buffalo for more information.¹⁶ Another searcher, C. T. Howard, was reported as more successful. He announced in the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*, in August, that he had found the remains of a vessel believed to be *Erie* off Silver Creek, and that he intended to raise her as soon as practicable.¹⁷

Pleasure excursions were run between arrivals and departures, as time permitted, at the principal ports. At Chicago *Great Western* took a large number out on the lake on the Fourth of July for a few hours for fifty cents a head.¹⁸ That of *Illinois*, on the twenty-sixth, was reported as unusually pleasant and as the occasion of an interesting experiment. On her return to port she presented the novelty of a vessel steered by a rudder at the bows instead of the stern. The rudder was shipped with little loss of time and she was well controlled by it. She backed in to avoid the delay occasioned by turning in the river. Captain Allen was credited with the

¹⁵ *Niles National Register*, LXII (27 August 1842), 416; *Daily Chicago American*, 13, 17 August 1842.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6 July 1842.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5 September 1842.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2 July 1842.

discovery of this simple method of avoiding a serious inconvenience.¹⁹ This was one of the first uses of a bow rudder by a steamboat anywhere.

Fire again took a heavy toll of lives and property on Sunday, 6 November. At 1:00 A.M. that day, *Vermillion* put in at Huron and tied up at the end of the pier near the lighthouse. On board were forty to fifty passengers, and asleep in their berths. The lake was calm and only a slight breeze was blowing from the land. The gangplank was run out at the forward gangway. As the pier was much higher than the deck, it was steep. In the freight being taken on board by the hands was a retail can of turpentine, part of a shipment of oils and paints. By either a mischance or carelessness, the can was upset while being passed down the gangplank and the contents were spilled out over the deck and some of it ran down into the fireroom. Coming in contact with the furnaces and the smoke pipe, they took fire and the flames burst forth in uncontrollable fury. In a moment the forward part of the boat was a mass of flames. The passengers were quickly roused. The flames cut off access to the gangplank and before they could get off to the pier, the mooring lines were burned through and the vessel slowly drifted out a half mile into the lake. All of them were in their night clothes. Some jumped overboard, and some were drowned; others stayed on board and were burned. The boats were lowered. One was swamped, but the others were the means of saving many lives. One who could not swim clung to the wreck for a half hour before being taken off. The steamboat *Chicago* came up and saved several from drowning and towed the hulk into the river where it sank. Nothing was saved of the cargo of 800 to 900 barrels of flour. The passengers lost everything. The ship's books and papers were destroyed, and along with them, the mails. The chambermaid and a lady passenger named Douglas are supposed to have perished in the fire; nothing was seen of them afterward. Others reported lost were Alexander Robinson, mate or captain of the schooner *Ohio*, a passenger, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Charles Haskins of Kingston, and Herman B. Ely of Rochester, New York, making a total of six. She was owned by the Western Transportation Company of Messrs. Gellston & Evans, of Buffalo. *Vermillion* was a good boat. It was rated as one of the best of the high-pressure boats and worth about \$50,000. Vessel and cargo were a total loss. It was reported no insurance was carried.²⁰

Twenty-four hours after the burning of *Vermillion*, trouble overtook *Wisconsin* while on her way to Chicago. She went ashore six miles north of the city in a fog so heavy and thick that no light or object could be dis-

¹⁹ Ibid., 27 July 1842.

²⁰ *Chicago Express*, 12, 14, 23 November 1842.

tinguished on her.²¹ The pilot had run her up the lake until he thought he was far enough south to make port. At the time he was running into land intending to lay by until daylight. He had a man swinging the lead continuously, who, through some mistake or carelessness, kept crying 'no bottom' to the pilot until the boat struck and grounded. The boat was not injured in any way, just beached, that was all. The passengers were all landed safely and conveyed to town in carriages procured by the officers of the boat. There were about forty tons of freight on board none of which was injured. It was thought she would probably be gotten off in a day or two.

Reported the *Chicago Express* for 7 November, 'the accident was owing to a mistake in heaving the lead, not of course from a want of nautical skill, for in addition to Capt. Randall, Commodore Blake and other old salts were on board.' While she was in no particular danger, the lateness of the season permitted no delay in refloating her. *Huron* went down to her the next day, took off the freight and brought it to the city. She was resting on the sand and two feet of water was pumped into her to keep her steady.²² She was refloated with the aid of steam, wind, etc., on the night of the ninth and brought safely into port.²³ Little damage had been done. A month later it was reported from Detroit that she was to be cut in two and lengthened by Captain Goodsell, her owner.²⁴

Milwaukie remained tied up in the Milwaukee River after her release from that quarter until 7:00 P.M., Thursday the seventeenth when it her theft from Buffalo appeared to be the easy solution to the problem of her ownership, in fact it turned out to be a troublesome and costly matter. The dispute over her ownership was taken to the courts and it was not settled until late in November this year. Juneau got about an eighth of his investment and received a large part of her outfit, mattresses, and whatnot. She then passed into the hands of Oliver Newberry.²⁵

A great storm swept across the lakes on 17-19 November. The wind switched around from the west to the southeast on the fifteenth and blew from that quarter until 7:00 P.M., Thursday the seventeenth, when it suddenly veered around to the west and began to blow with great force. The thermometer dropped quickly and at Buffalo twelve inches of snow fell. The steamboat *Chicago* left Erie for Chicago on the seventeenth with about forty passengers of whom ten were females, and a large cargo of

²¹ About the corner of W. Wilson Avenue and N. Marine Drive today.

²² *Chicago Express*, 7, 8, 9 November 1842.

²³ *Ibid.*, 10 November 1842.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 7 December 1842.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 9 December 1842; James S. Buck, *Pioneer History of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee, 1881), II, 152; A. C. Wheeler, *The Chronicles of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee, 1862), p. 62.

merchandise including a deckload of iron castings. She was hit by the gale a few miles above Conneaut and so suddenly that she could not make headway against it or round to safely to ride before it to a safe port. One smokestack was blown overboard. She drifted stern first all that night and on Friday morning was off the tip of the peninsula opposite Erie and still going east stern first. Anchors were dropped in the expectation that they would hold and port could be made when the storm went down. But it continued and increased in violence and carried away the remaining stack. The chains parted and she started to drift again. The revenue cutter *Erie*, in port, went out in an attempt to aid her but found it to be an impossible task. She was a melancholy sight to those on the shore, as she was blown along by the wind—one minute high in midair and the next low. About midnight of the eighteenth, she fell off into the trough of the sea and heeled over fearfully. The castings were thrown overboard to relieve her. The wind now blew her shorewards and she was thrown on the beach about Saturday noon three miles below Cataraugus Creek having drifted one hundred miles. The passengers and crew were safely put ashore. Nobody was lost. She struck at the only safe point along the whole shore. At any other point she would have been broken to pieces. She was not much injured and what was left of the cargo was safe. It was truly remarkable.²⁶ But other craft were not so fortunate. When the gale ended there were about thirty wrecks strewn along the shores of the lakes, eighteen on the Canadian shores of Lake Erie alone, and sixty-two lives had been lost.²⁷

On 24 November, an event took place of far-reaching importance to the lakes shipping interests. On that day the first train of cars drawn by a locomotive on the Buffalo and Attica Railroad steamed into Buffalo. Railroad transportation between Albany and Buffalo was now an actuality, though the journey of 328 miles was not continuous, but broken by six changes of cars and required twenty-four hours to make.²⁸ At Albany a connection was made with the Western Railroad, completed the year previous, for Worcester, Massachusetts, and Boston beyond. Lake Erie was now connected by railroad with a salt-water port.

The full implications of the event were not understood by the steamboat owners, who looked upon railroads as they did on the canals that terminated on the lakes, not as competitors, but as feeders. To most of

²⁶ *Chicago Express*, 6 December 1842.

²⁷ *History of the Great Lakes, Illustrated*, I, 638.

²⁸ The line was made up of seven short railroads, all under separate ownership; the Mohawk and Hudson, Utica and Schenectady, Syracuse and Utica, Auburn and Syracuse, Auburn and Rochester, Tonawanda, and the Buffalo and Utica. Changes of cars were made at Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse, Auburn, Rochester and Attica.

the steamboat people and to many others it was inconceivable that any traveler in his right mind could prefer riding on such a noisy, dirty, and dangerous contraption to a nice clean comfortable trip on a palatial steamboat, as were those on the Detroit and Chicago lines. But with the Michigan Central struggling, though feebly, to reach Lake Michigan, and other railroads proposed along the shores of Lake Erie, it was but a matter of time when they also would be built, and that all these short lines brought into continuous systems from salt water to Chicago.²⁹ The threat to their future prosperity was there.

Winter set in early after the big storm with more high winds, bitter cold, and ice. *Illinois* reached Chicago on 25 November in good condition after having been compelled by the storm to lay over five days at Mackinac. She left her dock on the *night* of 2 December for Mackinac if it could be reached but grounded between the piers at the river mouth. She finally got away at 1:00 P.M., Sunday, 4 December, for the lower lakes—'if she can reach them,'—remarked the *Chicago Express* the next day. In the night there was a strong wind accompanied with snow, and fears were expressed for her safety. But the *Chicago Express* whistling in hope on the storm, entertained no apprehensions on that score. She reached Milwaukee safely and weathered out the storm there. This same storm drove *C. C. Trowbridge*, the Milwaukee lighter, ashore on the fifth. It was reported from Detroit, that Lake St. Clair was frozen over with ice two inches thick, and that the Detroit River was frozen over at Malden as was Lake Erie as far out as the eye could see. *Missouri*, Buffalo bound with a cargo of beef, flour, and wheat, forced her way through twenty miles of ice on the St. Clair River

²⁹ Strange as it may seem, the city of New York showed little interest in these pioneer railroads. It placed its reliance on the Erie Canal as its way to and from the west. But the canal even with its branches could serve but a part of upstate New York. This was the case in the counties along the south boundary line, which the canal by-passed. An east and west canal through them being impracticable, it was not long after the building of the first short railroads, before they were clamoring for a railroad to end their isolation. As a consequent of their agitation, the New York and Erie Railroad, now the Erie, was chartered on 24 April 1832 to build a line across the south part of the state from the Hudson to Dunkirk on Lake Erie in the westernmost part. The first work on this trunk line, the first railroad to be planned and built as such, was started at Delaware City, N. Y., in 1835. Six years later the first rails of the western section were laid six miles east of Dunkirk.

Other seaports also had their eyes on the western trade, a large part of which was handled through New Orleans. Boston was already reaching out for it with its rail connection with Albany. Philadelphia and Baltimore were interested, not so much in the lakes as in the Ohio River, which still was the main artery over which it moved. But Montreal was a real contender of New York for this business. It had hoped and still hoped that with the improvement of the Welland and St. Lawrence canals, and railroads extending east to Halifax and west to the lakes that it could control it, or at least attract to its natural outlet a large part of the commerce moving over the Erie Canal and the Hudson River to and from New York. Toronto was no less interested. Suggestions were early made for a railroad to by-pass the canal, leading west from Toronto to connect with the Michigan Central, another to Sarnia at the head of the St. Clair River and still another to some point on Georgian Bay to connect with steamers running to Lake Michigan port and Sault Ste. Marie at the outlet of Lake Superior. Numerous charters had been granted for short local railroads, seven alone in the upper province, of them only one, the Ontario and Erie, the portage line around Niagara Falls already mentioned, had been built.

and Lake St. Clair on 29 November by almost incredible exertions. She reached Detroit the same day with both false sides cut through. Except for them, she would have had to have wintered in the middle of the lake. *Erie* attempted to follow in *Missouri's* wake, but was cut through by the ice and sank in nine feet of water off Mt. Clemens. She had but little freight aboard. The passengers and crew were saved but had to walk through five miles of icy swamp.³⁰ Snow fell at Detroit for thirty-six hours, the deepest fall ever seen there. *Missouri* and *General Wayne* were laid up there for the winter, blocked in by the ice. On Lake Michigan, *Illinois* left Milwaukee on 5 December for the straits but got only as far as Sheboygan, encountering so much ice that it was deemed prudent to turn back. She reached Chicago on the morning of 10 December and laid up for the winter.³¹

Mishaps other than those already reported were the loss of the Canadian steamer *Shamrock* sunk by the explosion of her boiler in July, at Pointe Claire in the St. Lawrence River, in which several lives were lost; the collision of the propeller *Chicago* and the steamer *Commerce* on Lake Erie in September, both sustaining injuries; the collision of *Wisconsin* and the schooner *Kinne* on Lake Huron in October; and that of *Chautauque* with the schooner *Lodi* near Sturgeon Point, in which the latter was sunk. *St. David*, a small Canadian boat, running between Kingston and Lachine went ashore at Howe Island late in November with five heavily laden barges which she had in tow in a terrific snowstorm. The passengers left the boat and after wandering around in the woods for some time found a log hut in which they remained two days. They were finally found and brought back to Kingston by *Prince of Wales*.³²

The trade of the upper lakes had grown tremendously in the past few years. Seth Johnson, Deputy Collector and Inspector for the Port of Chicago, reported its imports for this year as valued at \$664,347.68 and the exports as \$659,305.20, which figures, said he, were about two thirds of what they were really, as a great many vessels arrived and departed without being reported at the customhouse or leaving any evidence of the character and amounts of their cargoes.³³ Wheat was the chief Chicago export, about 700,000 bushels being sent east. The high prices of the preceding summer and fall did not hold up this year, but dropped steadily as the new crop came in for shipment. On 2 September, the price was 65

³⁰ *Chicago Express*, 3, 6, 7 December 1842.

³¹ *Chicago Express*, 10 December 1842.

³² *History of the Great Lakes, Illustrated*, I, 639.

³³ J. W. Norris, *General Directory and Business Advertiser, City of Chicago for the year 1844* (Chicago: Ellis & Fergus, 1844), p. 77.

cents per bushel. On 18 November, it was 40 cents. The times now became harder than ever before. On this melancholy note this bad season, with its low water,³⁴ late storms, ice and early winter, ended.

The first event of interest in 1843, was the burning of *Sandusky*, in Buffalo Creek at 4:00 A.M., 23 February. The fire was supposed to have been set off by incendiaries. With the exception of the engine, the destruction was complete. The loss was estimated at \$15,000 or \$20,000. No insurance was carried. She belonged principally to Messrs. Hollister.³⁵ The search for the wreck of *Erie* was kept up during the winter. It was finally found by means of an ingeniously constructed magnet which was moved over the ice and indicated the direction of the masses of iron that were sunk in her.³⁶ Attempts were made later to raise her, but were unsuccessful.

The winter was unusually long and severe. Temperatures were exceptionally low and deep snow covered the country of the lakes. In Michigan the winter was the severest in fifty-four years. Snow and exceptionally low temperatures were reported late in March and early April. The upper lakes were covered with ice. On 1 April, the weather was still cold and unseasonable. At Kingston, two days before, eight inches of snow fell. Ice averaging twenty inches thick covered Lake Ontario full thirty miles from Nine Mile Point. It was reported that Kingston harbor would not be clear of ice before the end of April.³⁷ In Buffalo harbor the ice was eighteen inches thick, and attempts to blast it out only blew holes in it.³⁸ Ice covered a greater part of Lake Michigan than it had for twenty years and it was thought doubtful that boats could pass the Straits of Mackinac before 15 April. At St. Joseph it was piled up in masses ten to eighteen feet high one mile from the shore.³⁹ At Chicago the lake and harbor were clear. There had been several departures and arrivals in the local trade and the arrival of boats from below was impatiently awaited.⁴⁰ At Milwaukee, *Milwaukie* was being dismantled. *Illinois* left Chicago on the morning of the thirteenth to pick up some freight and its engine which Newberry was to place in *Nile*, his new steamer building at Detroit. She returned to Chicago on the twenty-first and left for Detroit two days later with but faint hopes of getting through the Straits for some days as the ice

³⁴ The lake levels by the end of the season had dropped about 4.5 feet since the high water of 1838.

³⁵ *Chicago Express*, 3 March 1843. *Niles National Register*, LIX (4 March 1843), 16.

³⁶ *Niles National Register*, LIV (29 April 1843), 144.

³⁷ *Chicago Express*, 7 April 1843.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 April 1843.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 7 April 1843.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 21 April 1843.

there was still firm and sound with no water in sight.⁴¹ This same day *Huron*, now the United States Mail Boat, newly painted and fitted up for the season, arrived from St. Joseph having passed through twenty miles of ice along the eastern shore.⁴² As to what was left of *Milwaukie*, an attempt was made to run the hull out of the river, but she grounded in mid-channel and remained there, a detriment to navigation, until a great freshet swept her out into deep water. She was then towed to Detroit where she was used as a barge.⁴³ With ice over a very large part of the lakes, many ports blocked by it, extremely low water in the harbors and channels, a late opening of navigation in prospect, and the very hard times, the outlook for the season was gloomy indeed. But at Toledo there was a ray of hope. On 1 May, the Wabash and Erie Canal and its extension along the Maumee, part of the Miami and Erie, was opened to through traffic, the first boat arriving from Lafayette, Indiana. Toledo gave her a great reception. Another canal feeder to the lakes had been completed and great things were expected of it.

The Safety Act of 1838 continued to draw the fire of the steamboat people who still insisted that iron tiller ropes were unsafe. They asked for the repeal of the clauses that required them.⁴⁴ But Congress, instead of complying, passed another act requiring steamboats to be fitted with additional means of steering to be used by the pilot in case of fire or other trouble. No steamer was to be registered unless so equipped.⁴⁵

Bad as the prospects for the year appeared to be, shipbuilding took a turn for the better, twenty new steamers coming out or being launched late in the season. In addition three old ones were rebuilt. Eleven of these boats were built on Lake Erie and the upper lakes, including those rebuilt. All of them were American, and of them, two, U.S.S. *Michigan* and *Colonel Abert*, were public vessels.⁴⁶ Of the other new boats, three were propellers, *Independence*, *Hercules*, and *Emigrant*. *Porter*, one of the rebuilt boats, was also a propeller. The remaining five were steamboats—that is side-wheelers. The largest was *Nile*, 600 tons, for the Newberry interests. *Champion*, 270 tons, was built at Newport for the Wards. The smallest was *Union*, 64 tons, built at Black Rock. Those rebuilt other than *Porter* were *Wisconsin* and *St. Clair*. *Wisconsin* was lengthened to 235 feet, giving her a tonnage of 980, making her the largest steamer on the lakes. *St. Clair*,

⁴¹ Ibid., 13 April 1843; *Western Citizen*, 13, 27 April 1843.

⁴² *Western Citizen*, 27 April 1843.

⁴³ *Niles National Register*, LXIII (14 January 1843), 318.

⁴⁴ *Chicago Express*, 27 March 1843.

⁴⁵ H. A. Musham, 'Early Great Lakes Steamboats, Warships and Iron Hulls,' *AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, VIII, No. 2 (April 1948), 133-149.

formerly *Rhode Island*, was completely rebuilt, there being but little more left of that boat, said the *Detroit Daily Advertiser*⁴⁶ 'than there was of the boys jack-knife after it had three new blades and two new handles. She is thoroughly and entirely metamorphised into a new and elegant boat. Her tonnage is 250, length 150 feet, breadth of beam 19 feet, with 8 feet hold. The gentlemen's cabin and saloon are on the upper deck somewhat after the fashion of the *Great Western*. She has two staterooms on the upper deck, and four on the main deck, adjoining the ladies cabin, which is admirably adopted to comfort and convenience. She is furnished in a neat, plain, substantial manner which does great credit to the taste of our friend Gooding and is well guarded against accidents by fire.'

Of the twelve new boats on Lake Ontario, four were American and the rest Canadian. All the American boats were built at Oswego and three of them, *Oswego*, *Racine* and *New York* were propellers.⁴⁷ The fourth, *Rochester*, 354 tons was built by George Weeks. Her engine was one of the two in *United States*, which was broken up at Oswego this year. Of the eight Canadian boats, H.M.S. *Cherokee* and H.M.S. *Mohawk* belonged to the Royal Navy. Of the other six, two, *London* and *Adventurer*, were propellers. The remaining four: *Commerce*, 400 tons, and *Admiral*, 400 tons, were built at Niagara for the Royal Mail Line; *City of Kingston*, 400 tons, and *Island Queen*, 74 tons, were built at Kingston. The last named was a ferryboat.

Commerce set a record on her trial trip between Niagara and Toronto. As she eclipsed that made by *Lady of the Lake*, the fastest boat on the lake on the same run, her owners, the Royal Mail Line, changed her name to *Eclipse*.⁴⁸ They also gave *Niagara* the new name of *Sovereign*. *Admiral* was unique in her rig. While she was building Captain William Gordon, a brother-in-law of Captain Thomas Dick, one of the owners of the Royal Mail Line, appeared at Niagara and arrangements were made that he should command her and superintend her fitting out. Gordon was one of several old salts, in the fleet, original in their way, who had been brought up as regular seamen, having navigated nearly all quarters of the globe in sailing vessels. Gordon had all the feelings and prejudices of his class against any innovation of established rules of all sailing craft and a most thorough contempt of steam as a means of propelling power, which he said was a humbug, 'a delusion and a snare.' In fitting her out he had her rigged as much like a sea-going sailing craft as possible—as a three-masted

⁴⁶ *Chicago Express*, 22 April 1843.

⁴⁷ H. A. Musham, 'Early Great Lakes Steamboats, Warships and Iron Hulls,' *AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, VIII, No. 2 (April 1948), 134, 138, 140, 148-149.

⁴⁸ Robertson, op. cit., p. 878.

topsail schooner, with a large trysail on the fore yard and he mounted a four-pound carronade at the bow. The hull was painted black with a narrow streak of white around above her guards in Royal Mail style.

After a time all this gear was found to be in the way. It caused accidents and was soon reduced to only one mast and jib boom. Gordon was mortified at seeing his rigging removed and remarked 'the owners were a set of lubbers, for what did they know about it. Who ever heard of a ship without masts.'⁴⁹

This month of May completed a quarter of a century since the first steamer was launched upon the western lakes. Said the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* on 3 May in reviewing the progress made in the lakes country and in the steam navigation of the lakes, 'changes of vast magnitude have been effected by the application of the mighty agent steam. Dense forests which frowned from the margins of great lakes have been felled to give place to thriving villages, and the moody aboriginal occupant who gazed with wonderment at the approach of the wondrous vehicle, has been extinct, or is known only as a wanderer beyond the limits of the Mississippi. Changes like these have characterized the introduction of steam upon the lakes, and the independent inquiring spirit which so distinctly marks the habits of the people of this country has kept pace with the progress of steam westwardly, and developed the fertility and abounding resources of the prairies, until they have become the granary of the world.' It listed 105 steamers built on Lake Erie and the upper lakes since 1818 inclusive, a total of 27,000 tons at a total cost of \$3,510,000, and continued:

in examining the progress of a steam as applied in propelling vessels on the lakes we are struck with the small number of disasters when compared with other sections of the country, especially on the western waters. In the whole period of twenty-five years there have been but four explosions which might be termed serious. It is true there are other disasters to record, whose calamitous details are too fresh impressed upon the public mind. The following tabular view presents these classes:

Explosion		Lives lost	Burned		Lives lost
Peacock	September 1830	15	Washington	June 1838	50
Adelaide	June 1830	3	Erie	August 1841	250
Erie	August 1840	6	Vermillion	November 1843	5
Perry	Twice in 1835	6	Caroline	(wilfull)	1
		<u>30</u>			<u>306</u>

The number of boats yet remaining of the whole once in commission on Lake Erie and the upper lakes is about sixty, with an aggregate of 17,000 tons.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 905.

It was not at all a bad record but one of real achievement considering that *Erie* and *Vermillion* disasters were due to no deficiencies in the vessels themselves, and that *Caroline* was purposely destroyed. Eliminating them from the above list, the loss of life in twenty-five years of steamboating was but 80.

The combination functioned again this year. Anticipating a large western travel, it put thirteen boats in the Buffalo and Chicago Line. But this year it ran into real competition by the propellers. Consequently it made a second reduction in fares. That from Buffalo to Chicago was set at \$14 for cabin and \$7.00 for steerage.⁵⁰ But the Hollister propellers, *Samson* and *Hercules*, carried them for less, while the Doolittle boats, *Vandalia* and *Chicago*, running out of Oswego, met even that competition. They eliminated that part of the westward journey between Syracuse and Buffalo by canal, stage, or railroad. The substantial saving so effected was a boon to the immigrant. The railroads across New York were now running trains of cars between Albany and Buffalo, morning, noon, and night, the fare being \$11.50. Connections were made at Rochester with steamers running to Montreal and intermediate points on Lake Ontario,⁵¹ and at Buffalo for points west. The service, with its six changes of cars, while somewhat faster, was not yet entirely satisfactory. There were breakdowns, broken rails, and accidents with the engines and cars running off the track, and the passenger cars were far from comfortable. A trip across lower Michigan was worse. A Michigan Central train took six hours to cover the 80 miles between Detroit and Jackson. The track was of the strap-rail type and accidents, derailments, and snakeheads were common.⁵² At Jackson a stage took twenty-six more to get to St. Joseph, 120 miles farther. Then if Chicago was the destination of the weary traveler, it took little *Huron* seven hours to cover the 69 miles across the lake. With luck the 269 miles was covered in 36 hours. The fare was \$8.50.⁵³ A fatiguing journey at best that could not compare at all with the trip around the peninsula on a fine steamer, even though it took about half again as much time and the fare was somewhat higher as on the combination boats and even lower on the independents. The traveler from Buffalo had even less excuse to leave his Chicago-bound boat at Detroit. For

⁵⁰ *Chicago Express*, 5 June 1843.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 16 June 1843.

⁵² The rails were of wood laid on sleepers. A short iron strap one-half or three-quarters inches thick and two and a half inches wide was spiked on top of the rail. This strap sometimes worked loose from the rail as the train passed and the loose end curved upward through the bottom of the car, much to the dismay and danger of the passengers. One passenger had a snakehead wound around his neck.

⁵³ *Niles National Register*, LXIV (24 June 1843), 274.

comfort, interest and pleasure, the trip was unexcelled. The larger boats carried a band and there were concerts every day and dances in the evening. There was a gentlemen's cabin with a bar usually forward for those bibulously inclined or who felt the need of a bracer, and, who did not in these pioneer days? Gambling was prevalent and some boats were infested with 'black legs.' Sunday was decorously observed with services in the cabin, held by the captain or preferably by a clergyman who was generally carried free. On one occasion on board *United States* a passenger improved his shining hour by getting up a discussion on temperance in which several gentlemen participated. At its close the pledge was introduced which nearly 100 signed. Said the *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser*: 'let others go and do likewise.'⁵⁴ With all these goings on, a trip on the Michigan Central was, in comparison, a dull, stodgy affair.

The hopes of the combination for a real prosperous season did not materialize. Lack of business brought about a misunderstanding between *Great Western* and the rest of the combination steamers, by which, said the *Chicago Express* on 1 July, 'the Association may probably be broken up. It was considered expedient to haul off some of the steamers, and Capt. Walker of the *Western* was requested to change her departure accordingly. As he had advertised extensively all over the country and as persons arriving here, at Buffalo, and at the other ports, would expect to take that steamer according to advertisement, Capt. Walker declined to comply with the requisition. He will keep his time at all events.'

The opposition boats were quite active. The *Express* continued, 'The steamer *General Wayne* which left port last evening ran in opposition to the *Western*. She carried passengers in the cabin for \$5.00—some, it is said for \$3.00. She left with between fifty and sixty passengers. The *Western* put her price at \$10.00, adhered to it and carried out gallantly as usual, this morning a large number—as nearly as we could estimate about one hundred. The opposition—the bands of music playing yesterday afternoon aboard both boats, etc., etc., occasioned some excitement.'

The recently organized United States Lakes Survey⁵⁵ was active this season along the west shore of Lake Michigan, making surveys. Harbor facilities at Milwaukee were improved this year by the construction of a pier, 44 feet wide extending 1,200 feet into the bay, by R. G. Owens, the ale brewer, and others, just north of East Clybourn Street. It had freight sheds on the outer end and at the landward end, a large warehouse and tollgate. Among the appropriations for harbor improvements made by

⁵⁴ *Chicago Express*, 7 October 1843.

⁵⁵ H. A. Musham, 'Early Great Lakes Steamboats, Warships and Iron Hulls,' *AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, VIII, No. 2 (April 1948), 137.

Congress this year, was one of \$25,000 for the improvement of the harbor at Chicago and another for the same amount for construction of one at Milwaukee. Both were welcomed by the people of both ports. At Chicago it was a simple matter of dredging through the shoals at the river mouth and of extending the pier lakewards. At Milwaukee complications arose. While surveys by the United States Topographical Engineers had recommended a straight cut through the sandspit east of the point where the Milwaukee and Menominee rivers joined, local sectional interests forced the improvement of the natural mouth of the rivers about 3,000 feet south of the center of the city. Merchants with warehouses along the old stream were interested and bribery was charged. At Racine, the people, indignant at the failure of the government to make an appropriation for the construction of a harbor there, raised \$10,000 among themselves to build a pier extending 500 feet out into the lake. It was completed by the end of August.⁵⁶ Steps were being taken to erect a pier at Little Fort⁵⁷ during the fall.⁵⁸

With all these facilities being constructed or being planned there appeared to be opportunity for regular service between Chicago and Milwaukee and intermediate points. *George W. Dole*, which had lain idle for two years at her dock in the Chicago River, and having been handsomely thumped by vessels coming in contact with her, was hauled out to be thoroughly repaired prior to being put in the service.⁵⁹ Her companion boat *James Allen* was not so fortunate, having been sold down to Lake Erie.

On Lake Erie the combination had real competition. Opposition boats ran between Detroit and Buffalo in connection with the Michigan Central Railroad. One, *Champion*, the Wards' new boat placed the fare at \$5.00.⁶⁰ As a consequence the combination laid up *Thomas Jefferson* for the season and *Buffalo* was taken off the Chicago Line, to take her place. *Missouri* also on that line was laid up for two months. The propellers enjoyed a large patronage principally by emigrants. Norwegians continued to pour into Buffalo via the Erie Canal, boats bringing in 150 to 200 at a load. 'Rather too much of a crowd when the thermometer is at 90,' said the *Buffalo Gazette* for 9 August. The propeller *Samson* left Buffalo that day literally crowded with them, bound for the west—principally Wis-

⁵⁶ *Chicago Democrat*, 23 August 1843.

⁵⁷ Now Waukegan, Illinois.

⁵⁸ *Chicago Democrat*, 29 August 1843.

⁵⁹ *Chicago Express*, 27 June 1843.

⁶⁰ *Chicago Democrat*, 23 August 1843.

consin, where thousands had already settled during the present season.⁶¹ *Samson* made the round trip to Chicago and back in fifteen days, not very fast time even when way stops are allowed for, but what were a few days to an emigrant when the fare was so much lower than on the larger steamboats⁶² and a dollar bought so much.

Ward's Chicago-St. Joseph service did well during the summer. To accommodate the growing traffic *Huron* was replaced with the new *Champion* early in the fall, the former going into service between Detroit and Lake Erie ports.⁶³

Champion, 250 tons, had been built by the Wards at Newport during the preceding winter for this service, and was 148 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 9.5 feet deep in the hold. She had two boilers, a low-pressure engine with cylinder 65 inches in diameter and a stroke of 11 feet, which drove side wheels 33 feet in diameter. She was put on the Buffalo-Chicago run. She reached Detroit on her way to Chicago on the evening of 30 October with the greatest load of the season. Her passengers were almost innumerable covering every deck and her freight amountd to some 380 tons, merchandise and luggage. Gentlemen who came up in her said she proved to be an excellent sea boat and rode the waves almost as steadily as in a calm. Captain Randall felt as 'fine as silk,' with his new boat and fine load.⁶⁴

The Provincial Parliament of Canada now followed the example of Congress and enacted a similar law for the better regulation of all steamboats plying in the waters of the Province with additional regulations forbidding the use of high-pressure engines, racing, and challenging to race, and requiring that passengers were not to be put into lifeboats until they were fully afloat.⁶⁵

The first chart of Lake Erie other than one issued by a Federal or Canadian governmental agency was published this year by Robert Hugunin. It was said to be very correct by those who had experience on the lake. In compiling it he had the assistance of Captains Pheatt, Whittaker, Cotton, Blake, White and Wagstaff, their officers and many others for much valuable information.⁶⁶

Among the steamers that passed out this year were *United States*, broken

⁶¹ Emigrants were not all moved west by the steamers. Sailing vessels set rates that even the propellers could not meet and carried a large part of them. A schooner, *N. Dousman*, 130 tons, landed 250 Norwegians at Milwaukee on one trip this season. (*Chicago Democrat*, 23 August 1843.)

⁶² *Chicago Democrat*, 23 August 1843.

⁶³ *Chicago Express*, 7 October 1843.

⁶⁴ *Chicago Democrat*, 8 November 1843.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 7, 22 November 1843.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 8 November 1843.

up at Oswego, H.M.S. *Traveller* which was sold to Donald Bethune and converted to a towboat for use on the St. Lawrence between Kingston and Montreal, and *Great Britain*, which had given eleven good years of service was retired and soon after broken up.

There were no steamboat disasters this year and mishaps were comparatively few. On 2 August, *Columbus* was damaged by a collision with *Great Western*. In September, the schooner *Equator* was sunk in a collision with *Rochester* near Conneaut. *Kent* was disabled on Lake Erie and was towed into a Canadian port by *Huron*, which took over her passengers. On 1 October, the propeller *Porter* was damaged by a severe gale. *Constitution* also sustained damages and *Cleveland* collided with the schooner *Rebecca* in the same storm. Other accidents of the month were the grounding of *Missouri* at Point aux Barques from which she later sank in the St. Clair River at St. Clair, and the collision of *Bunker Hill* with the propeller *Independence* on Lake Michigan south of Milwaukee. In November, the propeller *Chicago* was damaged by running on a reef near Mackinac.⁶⁷

A casualty of note other than of a steamboat was the loss of the ship *Superior*, one of the very few such rigs on the lakes. *Superior*, Captain Munson in command, ran ashore in October at Michigan City and was a total loss. Her hull was that of one of the pioneer steamboats, *Superior*, built in 1822, at Buffalo.

All told the season had not been prosperous for shipping and for the steamboats in particular, but regardless of the hardness of the times and the boats laid up, there were increases in the amounts of the products of the upper-lakes country and Ohio that were shipped east. Wheat was the chief commodity moving east. Buffalo received most of it, 1,827,241 bushels, an increase of 271,802 bushels over 1842. Chicago alone shipped 628,967 bushels. Canada bought large quantities but the bulk of it was moved on to New York by the Erie Canal. Other native products also showed increases in amounts shipped. Buffalo in return sent large quantities of merchandise west. There was considerable inter-lake and intra-lake traffic, lumber, shingles and staves being the main item.⁶⁸

This traffic kept the economic level of the lakes country well above the depressed level of the rest of the country. But hard times cannot last forever in a hard working young country. The lowest point of the depression was turned early in the year and as the year progressed the country was slowly working its way out of it. The glow of good times could be seen above the horizon of the coming new year.

⁶⁷ *History of the Great Lakes, Illustrated*, I, 640-641.

⁶⁸ Norris, 77.

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H. A. Musham is a naval architect living in Chicago. He is writing a maritime history of the Great Lakes and this article is one of a series being published in NEPTUNE which are some of the results of his researches over a good many years.



Note abstracted from a notarial record kept by Daniel Moulton of York, Maine, 16 1784.

CONTRACT TO BUILD A SQUARE STERN VESSEL. On 6 February 1752, Nathaniel Sparhawk of Kittery, agreed with Robert Cleeves, John Burbank, Benjamin Burbank, and Joshua Walker, shipwrights in Arrundell, Maine, to build a square stern vessel forty eight feet keel Streight Rabbit besides the proportion of Rake, Twenty Feet Beam, Eight Feet Nine Inch Hold, three Feet ten Inches between Decks . . . to build Handsome Head, tay all Carv'd work & fine all Masts Yards Booms Windless Rudder Caps Crosstrees & Trussel trees,' . . . said Sparhawk to supply all ironwork, and pay £226.13.4 in English goods and £40. in cash.

Contributed by L. W. Jenkins

Notes

*Inchcliffe Castle, MELBOURNE FOR
LOS ANGELES*

WATER-FRONT reporters are, journalistically, a separate race—or at least they were before the days when nonmaritime city editors began assigning the latest product of some journalism school to the job of covering the incoming ships.

Living apart from the city room, generally in a cubbyhole in the corner of a tug office or upstairs over a ship chandler, they were a clannish lot. They came in to the office to turn in their copy at night, or, if it chanced to be pay day, early in the morning, for they were always broke. They were past masters of the art of innocently appearing aboard liner or freighter or tanker just before mealtime, and during the zany days of prohibition they were always able to find a drink of something better than moonshine. They were loyal to one another except in the matter of good stories; at such times as this, they knew neither the bonds of friendship nor, in all cases, of strict propriety.

Perhaps this was what was in the mind of the water-front reporter for *The San Diego Union* when he discovered a shocking similarity between his own column of 'Daily Wireless Reports' and those which were appearing, a few hours later, in *The San Diego Sun*.

The *Union's* reporter took great pride in those reports. Moreover, they were costing his paper what was then a tidy sum. True, Globe Wireless supplied them gratis to any paper who wanted them. Globe Wireless, however, had its station at Clearwater, some distance up the coast. So there was a nightly matter of paying Postal Telegraph to get them to San Diego. The idea of having the

hated opposition getting the same information for free was repugnant.

By a bit of adroit gumshoe work, the *Union* reporter established the fact that the *Sun's* position reports were filched from his own paper indeed. So he tapped out a line or two on his typewriter, and left them with the copy desk, to be inserted in the next night's incoming grist from Clearwater. Those along the San Diego water front who were avid followers through the *Saturday Evening Post* of the doings of the scandalous Mr. Colin Glencannon were therefor delighted, the next day, at a name which appeared halfway down the column of the previous night's positions. It read:

*Inchcliffe Castle, Melbourne for Los Angeles,
2280 Los Angeles.*

The next day it was there again, carefully moved up 240 miles for *Inchcliffe Castle's* probable ten-knot speed:

*Inchcliffe Castle, Melbourne for Los Angeles,
2040 Los Angeles.*

Sure enough, the *Sun* was picking it up. The next day *Inchcliffe Castle* was within 1,800 miles of Los Angeles Harbor—then 1,560.

By now, the reporter for the *Union* began to wonder if the daily listing of prospective arrivals and departures in the *Sun* was entirely of its own doing. It was a rainy Sunday afternoon—the classical condition under which reporters get into mischief—so as he trudged through the railroad yards on his way down to Broadway Pier, he thoughtfully jotted down the names of a couple of Pullman cars. They were, if memory serves, something like *Bryce Canyon* and *La Vérendrye*.

For Monday mornng, only two ships were due. *Hamlin F. McCormick* was expected with lumber from the Columbia, and—was it *Necanicum*?—was similarly laden, and due from some place like Field's Landing. That night the *Union's*

wicked reporter turned in his copy, and the next morning San Diegans read:

DUE TO ARRIVE

Today

HAMLIN F. McCORMICK, Portland and way.
BRYCE CANYON, El Segundo.
NECANICUM, Field's Landing.
LA VERENDRYE, Baltimore and way.

By Monday morning, however, the drizzle of rain had turned to a pea-soup fog. The wharves were deserted, for the fog was so thick that no one could get in. The fog persisted until midday and, with the word from the water front that no activity could be expected until things cleared up a bit, the *Sun* had a big fog story on page one.

'Four steamers,' it fearlessly informed its readers, 'lay fog-bound off Point Loma today, as the worst fog conditions in many years gripped the harbor.' And then they listed those four ships—*Hamlin F. McCormick*, *Necanicum*, *Bryce Canyon* and *La Vérendrye*. They were listed on the shipping page, too—along with *Inchcliffe Castle*.

The next day the *Union* had a waterfront story on page one also, but it wasn't entirely about the fog. It revealed the details of the good ship *Inchcliffe Castle's* voyage from Melbourne to Los Angeles, it cited the two fog-bound Pullman cars, and it made some snide remarks about people who steal news from other papers. To add insult to injury, the *Saturday Evening Post* picked it up for a few million additional readers.

Oddly enough the two feuding reporters, now grown gray and more or less respectable, today are on the most friendly of terms.

JERRY MACMULLEN

THE STANDING LUG

HAVING read with interest the treatise on fore-and-aft rigs,¹ there is a small addition that I might make concerning the

¹ R. L. Bowen, Jr., 'The Origins of Fore-and-Aft Rigs,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, XIX (1959), 155-199, 274-306.

lowly standing lug, in which I have had a little experience.

A good way to make the standing lug more weatherly is to make a line fast at the peak of the yard (it really is a yard, not a sprit or a gaff as some call it) and make the hauling part fast somewhere outboard on the weather side—if necessary in a boat of little beam, to the gripe of an oar lashed athwart to give more leverage. This strop, or whatever you want to call it—perhaps it's a brace—has to be gently trimmed, else it will pull down the head of the sail and/or put a strain on the luff roping. You have to experiment, trimming both brace and sheet until the sail draws just right. My own experience, in a rather full-ended double-ender, is that you can get another two points out of a standing lug in this way. This makes it a far more efficient rig than is generally supposed, and since it is so simple—not to mention a terrific sail for running wing and wing—it could and should be used more. As I remember Marin-Marie mentions a 'preventer' for his gaff, as it were in passing, and since his main was loose-footed, I am inclined to think he had a similar line down from his gaff peak to bring her a bit to windward. Perhaps I have misinterpreted this, however, since I read only the bad translation of his book.

Now there is a newly acquired picture by Ruysdael in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts which shows a spritsail-rigged boat on the starboard tack, and sure enough there is a strop coming down from her peak to a block and a two-part whip on the weather side. I submit that this must be the same principal as ours in the standing lug.

I sometimes think that people do not like the standing lug *principally* because it is used in lifeboats, those full-ended affairs which won't sail, and won't row, and won't, no matter what you do to them, give you any more than a S/L ratio of 0.8 or lower. In a fine-ended boat, with a straight run, you have some-

thing else again. Easy to sew, easy to rig, easy to drowse, safe in all seas, no trouble about jibing, she should be given a chance to prove herself in the right hull, and of course with right hands handling her.

JOHN C. BOWER, JR.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
RICHARD LEBARON BOWEN, JR.*

SINCE Mr. Bowen's writings on non-European craft and related subjects have appeared in several publications, and since there is a growing interest in these subjects, a bibliography of his work to date will be helpful to other scholars.—Ed.

Abbreviations: *AN* = *The American Neptune*; *MM* = *Mariner's Mirror*; *MEJ* = *Middle East Journal*.

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* Compiled by Richard LeBaron Bowen, Jr. Complete through the year 1959, excluding patents and articles in the field of engineering. Articles and books appearing during a single year are arranged in chronological order according to their publication date or release date (indicated below by A, B, C, etc., after the date of publication). In the two cases of joint authorship (1949A and 1958A) the names of both authors are given as they occur in the title. All other entries were written by Richard LeBaron Bowen, Jr. The general format (listing references by dates with small letters) used here was worked out in conjunction with Mr. Robert H. Haynes, Assistant Librarian of Harvard College Library. It is a variation of a system first used by the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard prior to 1931. (Cf. E. K. Sweet, *Suggestions for Preparing a Bibliography* [Cambridge, 1931].) This system with slight modification now finds wide use abroad, where it is called the 'Harvard system.' (Cf. Anon., 'Bibliographical References,' *British Medical Journal*, I (January 2, 1937), 33.) The specific format used for listing the titles of books and periodicals with their dates and publication data is that followed by THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE.

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THE DIPPING LUG

THE line leading from the peak of a lug sail to the deck, which Mr. Bower refers to in his note on the standing lug (above), may be properly called a 'vang.' Actually such a vang is standard equipment on the dipping lug sails (Arab lateens) found on Arab dhows. I have previously published many drawings and photographs which show this vang quite clearly on such craft.¹ It is interesting to note that on the Arab dhow the vang does not lead from the peak, but from a point on the yard almost half way down from the peak towards the mast. The reason for this is the fact that the Arab yard tapers to a slender spar at the peak, and a line here would only bend the end of the yard down, rather than trimming the sail. The vang on the dhow leads to the gunwale; there is no outboard gear. But the dipping lug does not suffer from the defects of the standing lug, for the sail area forward of the mast reduces the tendency of the after part of the yard to work to leeward.

RICHARD LEBARON BOWEN, JR.

¹ R. L. Bowen, Jr., 'Arab Dhows of Eastern Arabia,' *THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE*, IX (1949), 87-133.

Book Reviews

DAVID W. WATERS, *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times* (New Haven: Yale University Press and London, Hollis and Carter, 1958). 6" x 9 3/4", cloth, xxxix, 696 pages, illustrated. \$12.50 or 84s.

When James Wilson about 1764 wrote the preliminary remarks for the second edition of Robertson's *Elements of Navigation*, actually a history of the art, he laid the foundation for a long series of studies on this fascinating subject. Their authors have ranged from bibliophiles without practical knowledge to mariners without book learning. In almost each instance the resulting books have been one-sided, unbalanced works, each stressing the field best known to the author, neglecting always the background of world events of a political and technological nature which produced the great developments in navigation itself.

The present book for the first time brings to the subject an author well qualified in all phases, an officer of the Royal Navy, a trained historian, a bibliophile, and a tireless searcher for any detail which might bear upon his story. The result is a book that probably will never need to be written again.

While the title seems to restrict the study to the greatest period of English maritime exploration, say from the accession of Elizabeth I to reign of Charles I, the first part goes back almost two centuries to trace the growth of European knowledge both in theory and practice. In this period come many surprises, for instance, the English had to resort to kidnaping Portuguese, Spanish and French pilots to obtain trained navigators, and to robbery to get charts and instruments, so completely did England lack the necessary knowledge and tools. The second part in the greatest detail gives the story of the English contribution to the art and science. With a very few exceptions other nations added little or nothing. Consequently by the end of the period, as Commander Waters says 'only the solutions to the mechanical and optical problems of measuring time and altitude accurately still eluded them.' Even these during the next centuries the English would find in Hadley's quadrant and in Harrison's chronometer.

Each phase in the rapidly progressing story is described: the changes in naval architecture; the invention of instruments; the training of men; the writing and publication of instruction manuals. The effects of the one on the other are made clear, and with actors such as Drake, Raleigh, Hariot, Davis, Frobisher, Dee, Hakluyt, James, and the like on the stage at no time does the story become dull.

The book has been beautifully produced with eighty-seven illustrations and forty-three diagrams; a most comprehensive bibliography; and the ultimate in indices.

M. V. BREWINGTON

Peabody Museum of Salem

- KENNETH R. ANDREWS, Editor, *English Privateering Voyages to the West Indies 1588-1595* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1959). Hakluyt Society, Second Series, No. cxi. 5¾" x 8⅞", cloth, 431 pages, nine illustrations and maps. \$7.50.
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- E. G. R. TAYLOR, Editor, *The Troublesome Voyage of Captain Fenton 1582-1583* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1959). Hakluyt Society, Second Series, No. cxiii. 5¾" x 8⅞", cloth, 333 pages, 15 plates, four text figures, two sketch maps. \$6.50.

Year after year the Hakluyt Society brings out its light blue, well-printed volumes on voyages and travels. Now, well into the second hundredth volume of the second series, they form the largest mass of printed source material on explorations and voyages available. The quality is high and the editing meticulous. The present three volumes, all relating to the sea in the late sixteenth century, are no exception.

The Andrews' volume deals with the twenty-five best-known English privateering voyages to the West Indies in the period between the defeat of the Armada and Sir Francis Drake's last voyage. The three principal sources used are the printed accounts from Hakluyt, the Archivo General de Indias (translated by Miss I. A. Wright) in Seville, and the Records of the High Court of Admiralty in the Public Record Office, London. Combining the Spanish records with the English provides us with an unusually full and well-balanced picture of these adventurous voyages. As the editor remarks in his introduction:

Official reports and investigations, as well as private letters, give us a measure of the impact, psychological and economic, naval and military, of ventures which, in the laconic accounts of English seamen, seem almost routine. The English may give more of the matter-of-fact details, and give them more accurately, but the Spanish provide more of the colour, the excitement and the heat of battle—more, too, of the parleys, illicit trading and intrigue. They tend to exaggerate the scale of the attack and enemy casualties, but rarely to such an extent as to discredit the substance of the story; only once or twice are panicky rumours repeated; far more often the authorities somehow obtained and forwarded valuable intelligence about the corsairs' strength and movements. Above all, the Spanish reports enable us, as no English material can, to weigh the significance of these depredations in the general struggle between Spain and England in the nineties and in the longer-term struggle for supremacy in the Caribbean.

Rivaling the annual passages of the Manila galleon among the great historic voyages was that of the Portuguese *carreira da India*, the round trip between Lisbon and Goa. This trade, at its most spectacular in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was conducted with the biggest carracks and galleons of their day. The finest Portuguese vessels were built in India where construction costs were cheaper and the ships stronger and longer lasting than those built in Europe. Because of the system of allowing officers and crews deck space in lieu of wages the great lubberly carracks were always overloaded on the homeward passage. The result of this and other lax practices was an appallingly high loss rate in the trade. Ac-

counts of the many tragic shipwrecks and disasters were originally published in pamphlet form for popular sale and they are now very rare. In 1735-1736 two volumes containing a dozen of these narratives entitled *História Trágico-Marítima* were published in Lisbon and a third, much rarer volume, with another half-dozen appeared shortly thereafter. The present volume contains three of these narratives relating to South East Africa, translated by the editor who tells us: "Taken together, they thus display all aspects of the eighteen different relations which make up the *Tragic History of the Sea*, and provide both the variety and the unity which is required in a work of this kind."

Miss Taylor's volume concerns a peculiar voyage originally planned by the Earl of Leicester in 1580 to attack Spanish shipping under a Portuguese letter of marque. The Union of Spain and Portugal upset the plans and the expedition was reorganized as a trading voyage to the Moluccas. Captain Edward Fenton, who had sailed with Frobisher on his last two Arctic expeditions, was chosen as commander and Richard Madox of Oxford as one of the chaplains. It is Fenton's sea journal and Madox's diary, neither ever printed before, that make up the body of this book. Miss Taylor has done one of her usual pieces of superb scholarship in the editing of these documents. No sooner had Fenton cleared port than he decided on a piratical cruise and never sailed to the Eastern Seas at all. Instead, after being forced into Sierra Leone where the accounts of his two months' stay are particularly interesting, he crossed over to Brazil where he was attacked by the Spaniards and then ran for home where he was arrested.

All three volumes are enriched with appropriate contemporary illustrations and maps.

ERNEST S. DODGE

Peabody Museum of Salem

CHRISTOPHER LLOYD AND R. C. ANDERSON, Editors, *A Memoir of James Trevenen* (London, 1929). Publication of the Navy Records Society. Volume CI. 6¼" x 9", cloth, 247 pages, frontispiece. 45s.

The manuscript of this volume was originally written by James Trevenen's brother-in-law, Admiral Sir Charles Vinicombe Penrose about 1805. The editors have made sensible rearrangements of some of the material, omitted most of the trivial matter not relating to the navy, and added their own illuminating notes.

This is an important book on several counts. The young man who is its subject (he died 9 July 1790 at the age of thirty-one) crowded enough careers into his years for several lives.

As a midshipman on Captain Cook's third voyage to the South Seas he made close friendships which lasted his lifetime. Those who served with Cook remained a band of brothers. On the return of the expedition Trevenen was promoted to lieutenant. He was the particular friend of Captain James King who saw the official account of Cook's third voyage through the press.

Trevenen's ambition for the active life of a naval officer was frustrated for there were more officers than were needed at this time.

In 1787 he went to St. Petersburg to take command of a Russian exploring expedi-

tion which never sailed. Instead, war with the Turks and hostilities between Sweden and Russia demanded the service of every ship and officer. Trevenen accepted command of a ship of the line. There were many British officers in Russian naval service at this time, where they worked for a pittance but with the temptation of rapid promotion constantly dangled in front of them—promotion that seldom materialized for it was usually prevented by the intrigue of jealous Russian officers.

During his Russian service (which was confined to the Baltic) he conducted himself well in several engagements with the Swedes. He was an ardent admirer of Admiral Samuel Greig under whom he served, but had little use for most of the Russian officers. While in command of the ship of the line *Rodislav*, he lost her on the rocks near Revel but was acquitted by a court-martial. Not the least interesting to Americans are his criticisms and low opinion of John Paul Jones (an opinion shared by many of Jones's contemporary American officers) who was also in Russian service at this time. Only on Catherine's promise that Jones would serve only in the Black Sea did the British officers in the Baltic consent to remain in her navy.

James Trevenen was mortally wounded in an engagement with the Swedish fleet, in which he distinguished himself, off Viborg, 4 July 1790. His obituary (which is reprinted in this volume) which was written by his old shipmate David Samwell, surgeon's mate in *Resolution* and later surgeon in *Discovery* on Cook's third voyage, appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1790.

Trevenen's is the only account of a British naval officer in the Russian Baltic service that has survived. The Naval Record Society is to be commended for printing this useful and extremely interesting work.

ERNEST S. DODGE

Peabody Museum of Salem

J. A. STEERS, *The Coast of England and Wales in Pictures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960). 7¾" x 11¼", cloth, 146 pages, 167 illustrations. \$5.50.

As stated in the title this is a picture book, but it is no ordinary one. The photographs selected are a judicious combination of both ground and air pictures which present a better idea of the coast than could possibly be obtained by using either alone. The photographic survey, if it can be called such, begins at London, follows the coast south and west along the channel to Land's End, around Wales, and along the Lancashire and Cumberland seaboard. It then crosses over to Berwick, skipping Scotland, and goes south again to London. The book is intended to present the natural shore line and its formation, and the commentary is geologically oriented. There are no port views. On the other hand the pictures of many headlands and landmarks familiar to seamen are some of the best ever published. In the maritime history field this book will be useful for identifying scenes in the maritime paintings, prints, and photographs.

BOOKS RECEIVED

CHARLES W. ARNADE, *The Siege of St. Augustine in 1702* (Gainesville: St. Augustine Historical Society and University of Florida Press, 1959). 6" x 9", paper, 67 pages, 12 maps and illustrations. St. Augustine edition, \$1.00. Publisher's edition, \$2.00.

A useful and detailed account of an all too little known episode of Florida history.

FRANK BARCUS, *Freshwater Fury: Yarns and Reminiscences of the Greatest Storm in Inland Navigation* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960). 6 1/4" x 9 1/4", cloth, 166 pages, frontispiece, 19 chapter head illustrations. \$3.95.

A comprehensive account of the worst storm ever to hit Great Lakes shipping. The Great Storm of 9 November (Black Sunday) took the lives of 251 sailors, destroyed 39 vessels, and caused enormous other damage.

CHARLES G. DAVIS, *The Built-Up Ship Model* (Caravan Book Service, Jamaica 82, New York, 1960). 6 1/4" x 9 1/4", cloth, 206 pages, 37 plates, text figures. \$13.50.

Offset reprint of the book originally published by the Marine Research Society of Salem in 1933.

CHARLES EDEY FAY, *Mary Celeste: The Odyssey of an Abandoned Ship* (The Atlantic Companies, 45 Wall Street, New York, 1960). 7" x 10 1/4", cloth, 80 pages, 13 plates, text illustrations. No price.

An offset reprint with a new Foreword of the abridged edition of the book originally published by the Peabody Museum of Salem in 1942.

ROBIN D. S. HIGHAM, *An Introduction to Maritime, Naval and Aeronautical History*, Library Study Outlines, Volume I, Number 3 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Library, 1960). 6" x 9", paper, 75 cents. In North Carolina, 50 cents.

Orders for this useful pamphlet should be addressed to the Interlibrary Center, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Drawer 870, Chapel Hill, N. C.

DAVIS D. AND LUCILLE A. McELROY, *Four Centuries of Sea Plays (1550-1950). Being a Representative List of Theatrical Productions Involving Sailors, Ships, and the Sea Arranged to Illustrate the History of the Nautical Drama in Great Britain; To which is added a Chronological List of some Non-theatrical Pageants and Royal Shows of Nautical Interest* (London: For distribution by The Library of the British Drama League, Fitzroy Square, 1960). Paper, mimeographed, \$1.00.

Slow Bell: Steam Launch Operators of the World. No. 5, May 1960 (published by Bill Durham, 3722 Bagley Avenue, Seattle, Washington). \$2.00.

A specialized journal for the growing group of hobbyists who own steam launches.

COOLIE VERNER, *A Carto-Bibliographical Study of the English Pilot: The Fourth Book with Special Reference to the Charts of Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1960). 5" x 6 3/4", boards, 88 pages. \$5.00.

A useful and scholarly work but unfortunately produced in offset from typescript.

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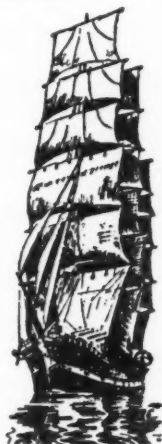
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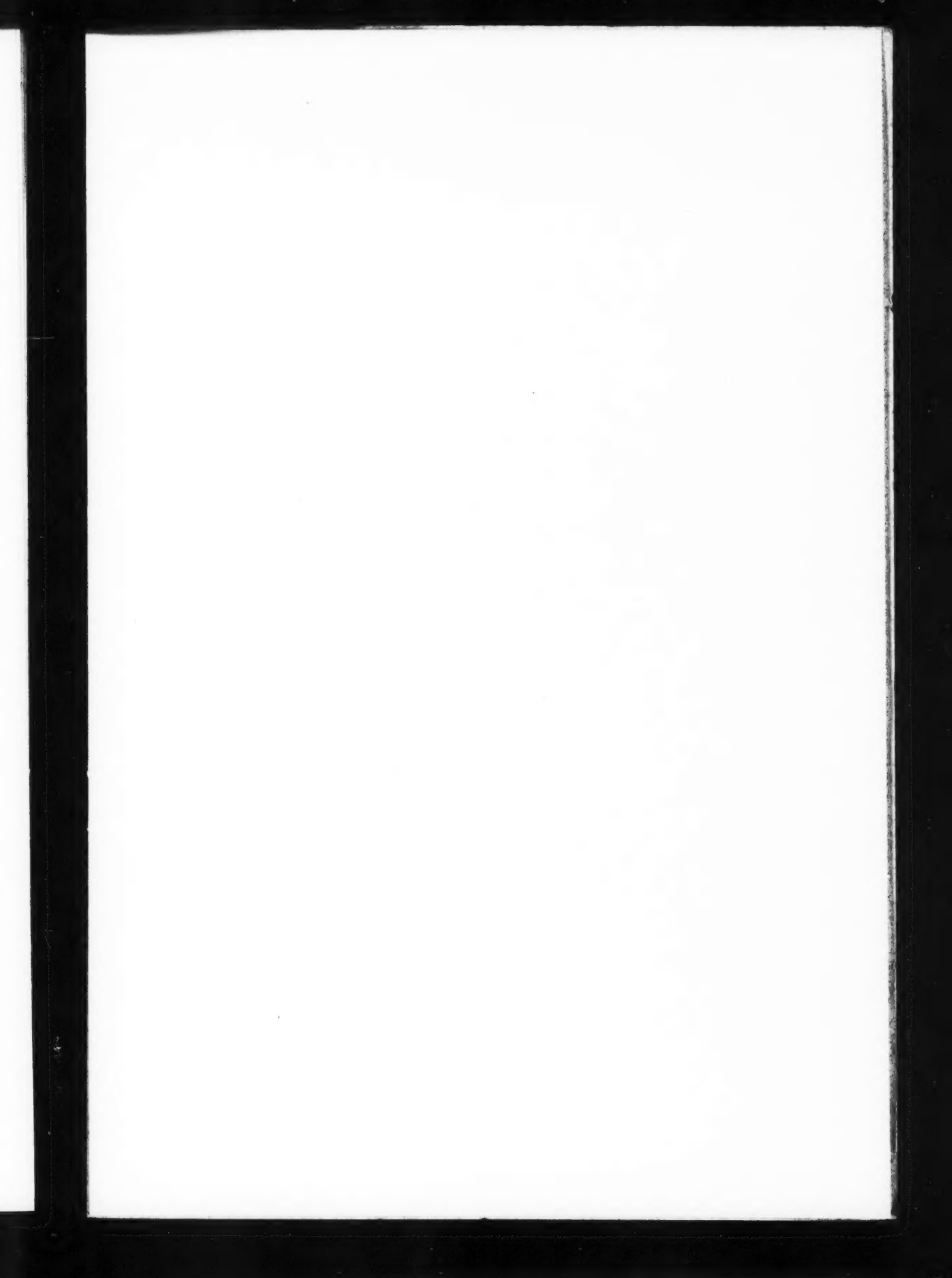
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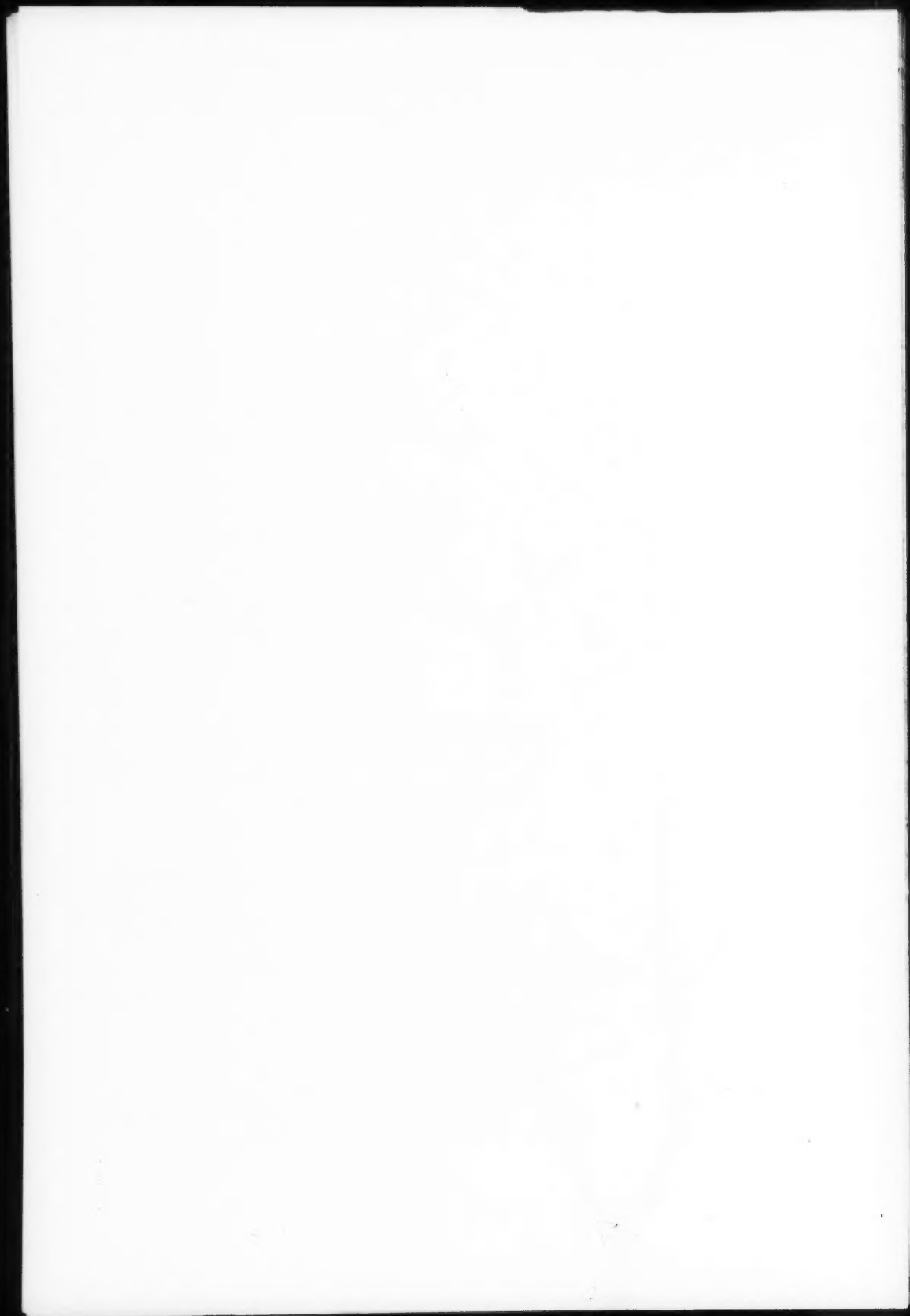
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